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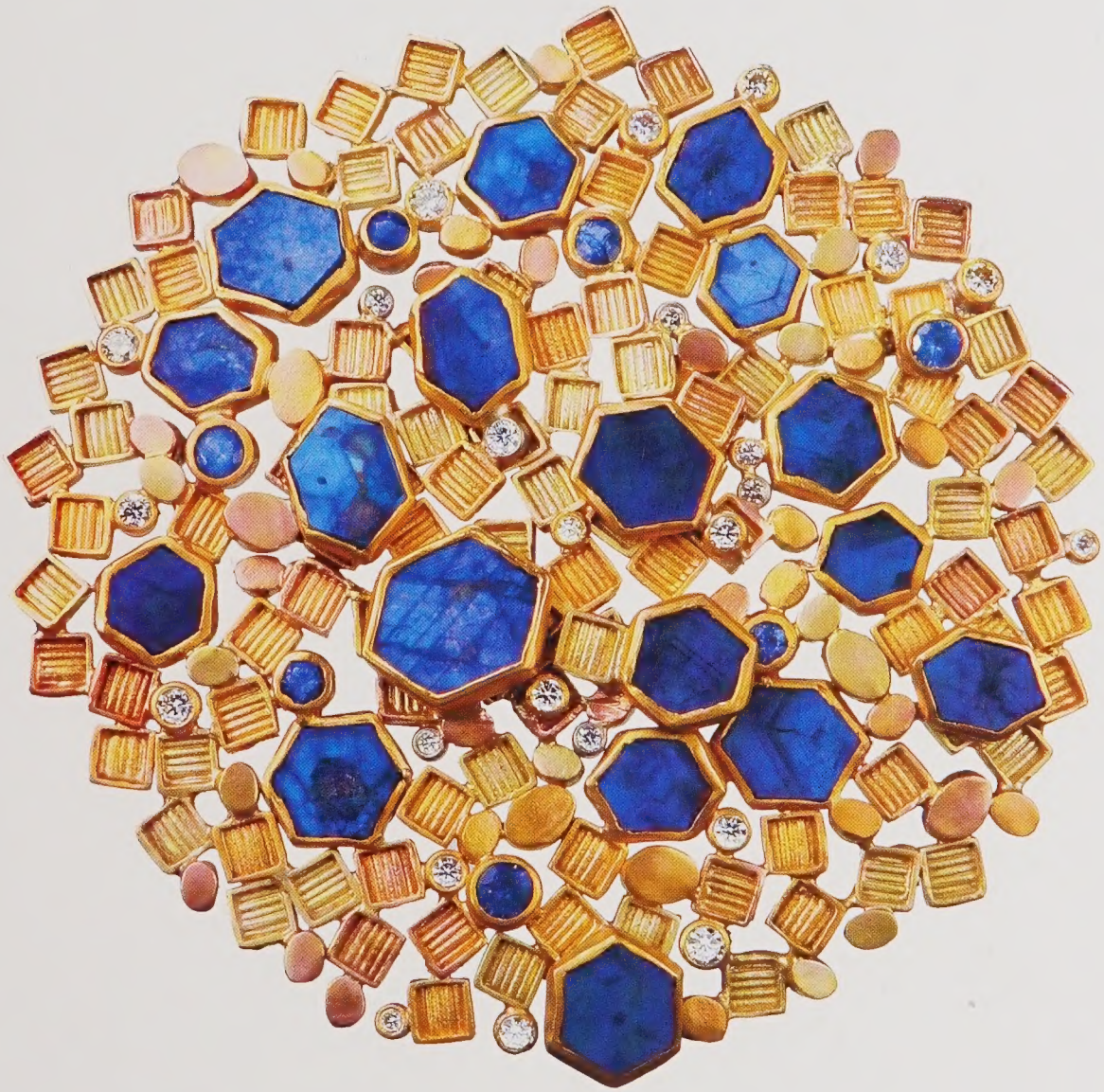
30 YEARS

Ron Arad: Elegant Mutation
Aesthetics on the Edge
The Thrill Factor
Dossier: New Zealand



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Exposed (pendant), 2009. Oil on masonite, sterling silver, vintage plastic objects. photo: Amy Gray

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PHOTO: NICK FERRARI

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FOREWORD

RON ARAD'S RECENT RETROSPECTIVE at The Museum of Modern Art, titled "No Discipline," highlights a basic tenet of creative practice: that discipline and freedom go hand in hand. His work indeed traverses disciplines—merging furniture, sculpture, architecture, craft and design—while blending industrial and natural materials with high-tech and hands-on techniques. The liberality and captivating extravagance of his art can be sustained only through intense dedication, however. Arad is a kindred spirit to this issue's other featured artists, Sergey Jivetin and Lucy Sarneel, who also produce works that keenly balance abundance and restraint.

Jivetin's jewelry thrives on the challenges posed by unlikely materials, enlisting such found items as watch hands, fish hooks, saw blades, and syringes. In his series built of reinforced eggshells, Jivetin masterfully transforms this technically demanding substance into structures that appear to have grown organically like mushrooms.

Lucy Sarneel harnesses a vast array of materials in her jewelry as well, including spoons, shells, flowers, antique fabric, and bows. This panoply is tamed by her dominant use of zinc, a quiet-toned metal that adds decorum to the otherwise boisterous compositions. Her approach embodies equal measure of control and release. "It is like the process of life," says Sarneel. "It is all about building up and letting go."

Each in their own way, these artists have stretched the boundaries of the metals field. They have exercised their creative license by declaring allegiance to rules of their own choosing; playing fast and loose within self-imposed borders. Orson Welles declared that, "the enemy of art is the absence of limitations;" indeed, these artists have embraced limits to allow their art to expand freely into new directions.... m

SUZANNE RAMLJAK
EDITOR

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

metalsmith

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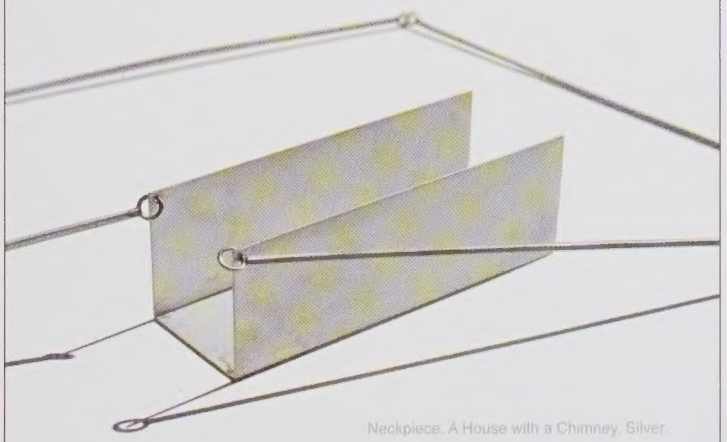

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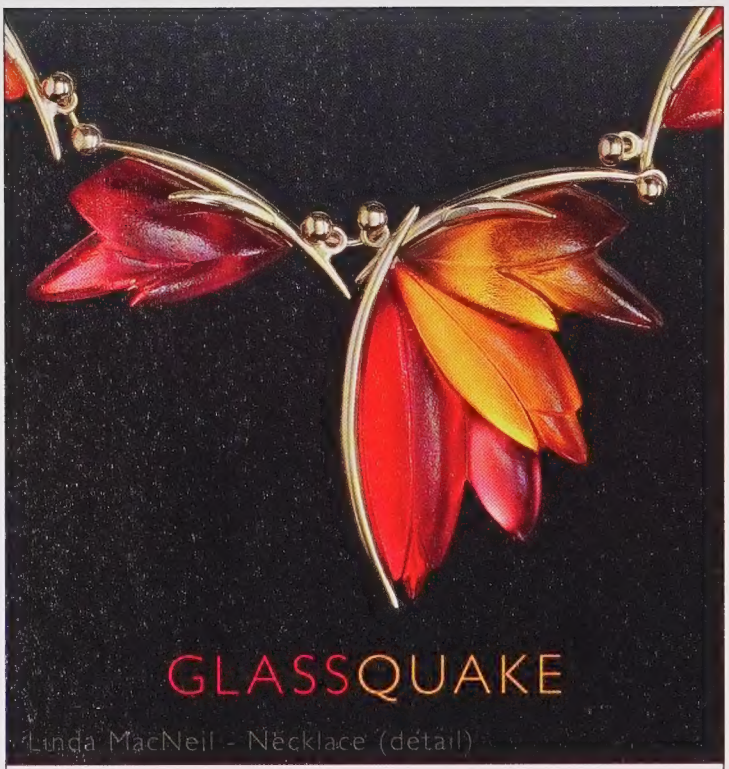

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Linda MacNeil - Necklace (detail)

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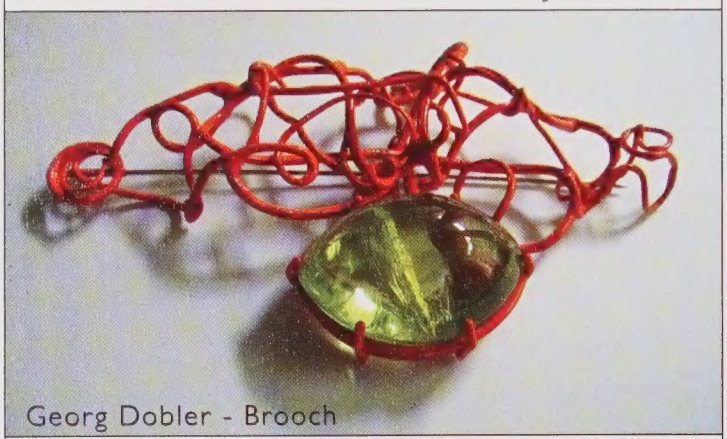

Georg Dobler - Brooch

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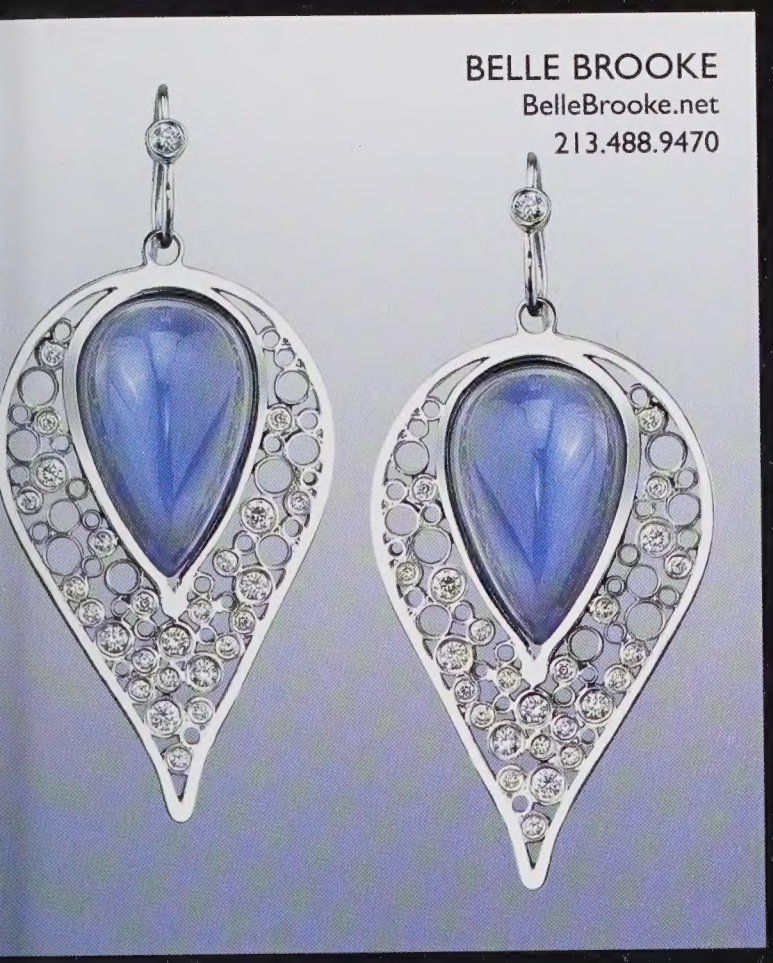

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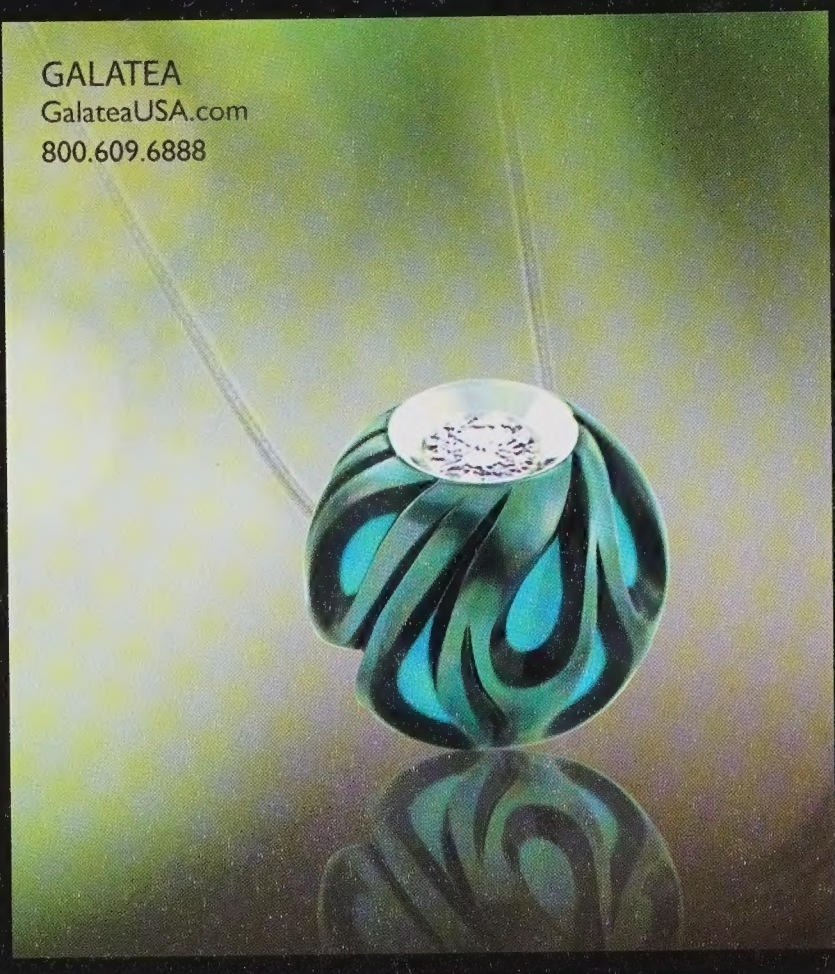

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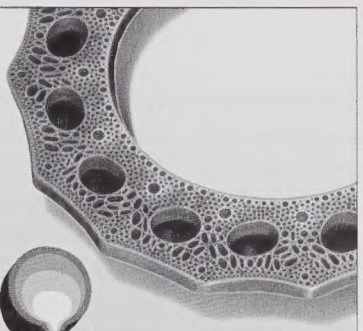

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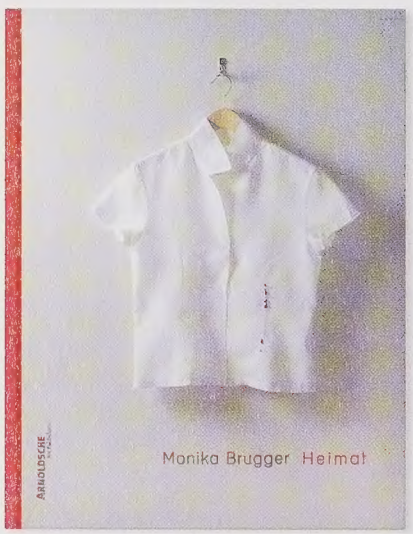
Monika Brugger: Heimat

CAROLINE BROADHEAD, ET AL.
ARNOLDSCHE ART PUBLISHERS,
STUTTGART, GERMANY 2009
BY ANDREA DINOTO

Dorothea Prühl: Colliers/Necklaces

FLORIAN HUFNAGL, EDITOR
ARNOLDSCHE ART PUBLISHERS,
STUTTGART, GERMANY, 2009
BY URSULA ILSE-NEUMAN



MONIKA BRUGGER IS one of Europe's more radical and engaging conceptual artists, whose approach to jewelry is filtered through textiles and the accouterments of needlework. This bilingual (French/English) book offers more than 100 color photos of her provocative work, together with an insightful artist interview and numerous commentaries by leading French critics. Paradoxically, Brugger is actually less interested in materials than in concepts of fragility, absence, loss of innocence, familial love, and sexuality, all of which are implied in the book's subtitle, *heimat*, a German word of vast implications that commonly translates as "love of homeland." But *heimat* is also interpreted more specifically as a deep sense of nostalgia for one's childhood or place of birth. Brugger is surely asking us to view at least some portion of her work in the latter sense (unhelpfully, this important term is nowhere discussed in the book).

Brugger's metalwork includes a series of convex silver disk brooches that have been perforated "to the point of collapse," in the words of Caroline Broadhead. "One of the themes in Monika Brugger's work," she writes, "is an oscillation between the potential for damage and the care needed to prevent it. It speaks of the everyday dance of survival that we are all involved in ..." Of these pieces Broadhead observes: "Monika has taken most of it away, but is somehow left with more than she started with." In her textile work, Brugger assigns preciousness, or "iconic status" in Broadhead's words, to evidence of damage and bodily fluids, so that the presence of blood or sweat stains is indicated or embellished by means of embroidery or beading. Brugger also expresses the idea of jewelry through the benign charm of a word—*broche*—which she embroiders on dresses, together with its full definition as it appears in the French dictionary *Le Nouveau Petit Robert*. *Broche* also happens to be French slang for breasts, an image that Brugger renders three-dimensionally in silver castings of her own fingertips, creating erotic, yet ambiguous, forms. Her method is to dip her fingertip in wax, allowing the drip that forms as the finger is withdrawn to remain as a nipple. This curious finger/breast (thimblelike, but also condomlike) is then cast in silver and eroticized through piercing, either with an open gold loop (so it can be worn as a ring), or with a pin to make a brooch. In his essay, "Passage of Desire," Frederic Bodet interprets these objects as "paradoxes of the intimate," an apt phrase that would describe Brugger's entire body of work—provocative, nostalgic, transformative, and deeply personal—her own private *heimat* of the mind.

Andrea DiNoto is a New York-based writer on art, craft and design.

DOROTHEA PRÜHL (b. 1937 in Poland) has long been affiliated with the renowned Burg Giebichenstein Kunsthochschule in Halle/Saale in the former German Democratic Republic, which along with the Bauhaus was one of the most important art schools in early twentieth-century Germany. After completing her studies at the "Burg" in 1962, Prühl returned four years later to teach, beginning a 25-year tenure during which she became professor of art, and established, and profoundly shaped, the jewelry class as an independent course of study together with Renate Heintze. Although Prühl worked in relative obscurity in East Germany for much of her career, since the German reunification in 1989, she has become

a major figure on the contemporary art jewelry scene. This elegant folio-sized German/English monograph, published in connection with the spring 2009 exhibition of her work at Munich's Pinakothek der Moderne, presents 37 of her most important necklaces, created between 1966 and 2008. The well-conceived and executed book is indicative of the much-deserved recognition Prühl is now receiving.

Prühl's work embodies the essential teachings of the Halle school: understanding the inherent qualities of materials and mastery of essential techniques, coupled with a study of both craft traditions as well as natural forms. As a teacher and jewelry maker, Prühl stood up to the officially dictated orientation towards mass-producible design in East Germany and defied the focus on technical perfection by emphasizing the development of a personal artistic statement.

To Prühl, "colliers for the neck represent jewelry par excellence," and she favors the necklace form as an unequivocal statement about the woman wearing it. Her neckpieces are masterfully constructed sculptural forms demonstrating great sensitivity to her materials, from hand-carved native woods (alder, cherry, and elm), to metals, alone or in intriguing combinations such as stainless steel and gold, or titanium and gold. Her unadorned loops of pure gold are sophisticated formal solutions that markedly contrast with her more vigorous necklaces composed of basic shapes of unadorned wood or metal elements, held together by rough, twisted cords or simple chains. These highly sculptural compositions reveal the mark of the hand and often convey a primal energy with no efforts wasted on the non-essential or decorative elements. Her scrupulous attention to detail emerges naturally without the least fussiness or careless gesture.

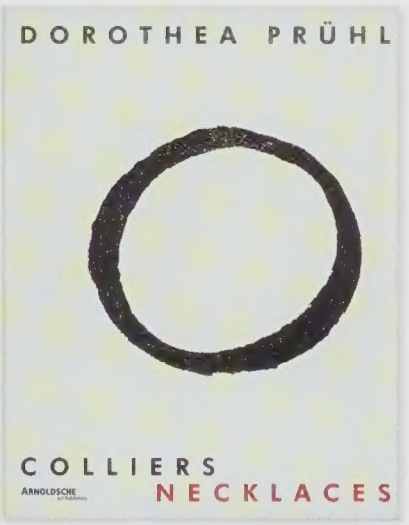
The beautifully photographed, oversize volume provides an excellent introduction to this exceptional artist. Following the insightful and eloquent foreword by Florian Hufnagl, director of the Pinakothek der Moderne, and a brief biography, each work is presented in near chronological order, at "true" scale on its own page, a welcome feature that avoids the persistent dilemma of addressing scale in jewelry publications. The layout of the book is clear and simple,

with the original German text followed by a lucid English translation (in sepia), and only the piece's caption on facing pages to keep the focus firmly on each work. The concluding appendix contains useful information on Prühl's works in public collections, and in selected exhibitions and publications, which together reveal the expanding interest in this artist's jewelry.

The central essay, "The Simplicity That is So Difficult to Attain," is by Dr. Renate Luckner-Bien, art historian and public relations representative at Burg Giebichenstein who has known Prühl for many years. Luckner-Bien surveys her career and includes personal experiences, providing insight into Prühl's creative process, although the dense prose occasionally tends to obscure as much as it enlightens. The valuable points she makes on specific works and comparisons over different periods would have been enhanced by more images or direct references to necklaces found in the book.

Dorothea Prühl, Colliers/Necklaces is a beautiful publication in a large format worthy of the importance of a leading figure in contemporary art jewelry. This volume will serve both as an introduction to those unfamiliar with this outstanding artist and as an affirmation to those who already deeply appreciate and love her work.

Ursula Ilse-Neuman is curator of contemporary jewelry at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York.



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Angela Bubash and Nathan Blank

A Space of One's Own

BY KATEY SCHULTZ

FIRST AND FOREMOST, insist on creating your own studio space. This credo has been the foundation for Angela Bubash and Nathan Blank's paths as studio artists and life partners. After Angela completed a three-year residency at Penland School of Crafts in 2007, and Blank ended his tenure as Metals Studio Coordinator there, the couple set down roots in nearby Avery County, North Carolina, claiming the rural Appalachian Mountains as the site of their first official venture toward self-sustaining studios.

"There are times when you look at each other and ask, 'What are we doing?'" says Bubash. "It's a struggle, but we love what we do." They quickly realized that occasional part-time work would be necessary as they each completed their studios and balanced the nitty-gritty details of home ownership. Bubash joined the faculty at Appalachian State University and Blank assists an area blacksmith. But ask them where their deepest affinities lay, and the answer is clear: in their studios.

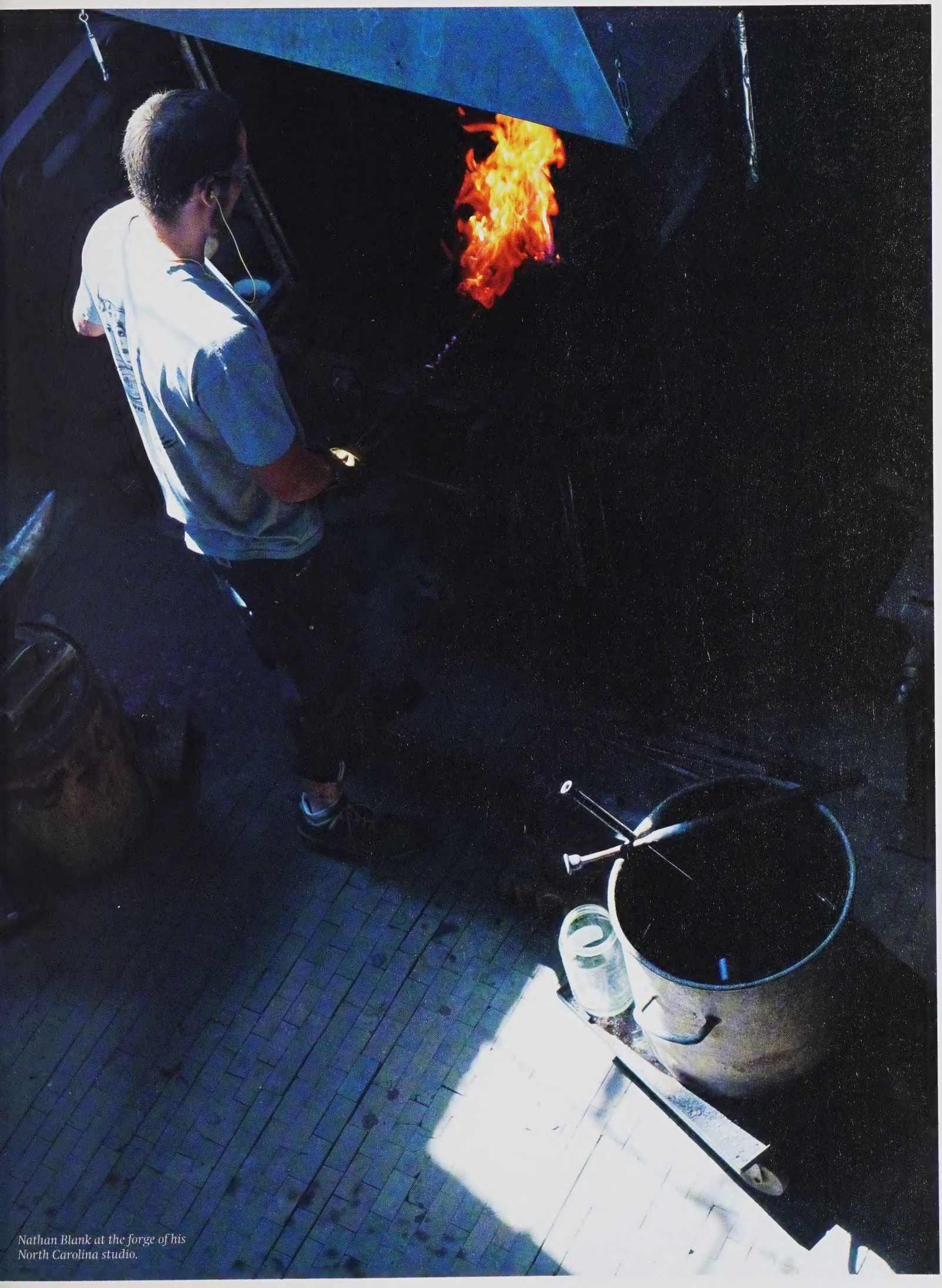
"When we first came here, this space was infested with carpenter ants. My studio used to be a summer kitchen. There was water damage everywhere," says Bubash, now beaming in her cozy jewelry studio replete with natural tones and collected objects. "My studios have always been functional, beautiful, and inspiring spaces in which to work," she says. "No matter what challenges I encounter aesthetically or technically, I have made the space as appealing as possible and I want to be in here."

For his part, Blank had to redesign everything, from the dirt floor to the uninsulated walls. "Anyone in their right mind would not have done this," he laughs, referring to the hand-installed end-grain wood block flooring that adorns his coal forge. "But the environment is definitely a big key to creating a space to work in." Later, he points out a column of morning glories in full bloom outside his studio, observing how they open and close each day. Blank not only redesigned the studio out of entirely recycled or scrap materials, he did it on his own. Perhaps the most notable feat was forging an oversized crowbar so he could single-handedly move his 3,000-pound power hammer from the studio entrance to its resting place across from the coal forge, a distance of about ten feet.

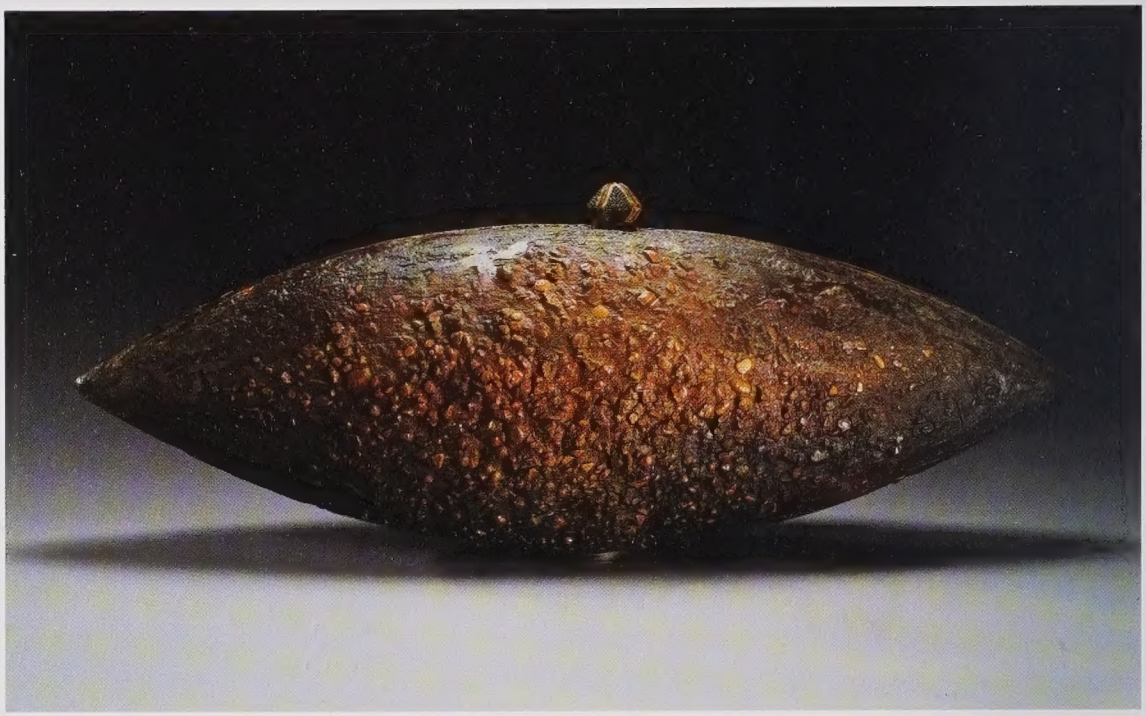
When it comes to craft, it's almost enough to say Bubash and Blank's bodies of work speak for themselves, as both artists rely heavily on narrative concepts. Using bones, seeds, petals, dyed feathers, hair, and various glass components, Bubash creates small, wearable containers, functional jewelry that tells a story. Whether she is making reliquaries that highlight the human predicament or a series of

Angela Bubash at the soldering station of her jewelry studio.
PHOTO: JONATHAN HELLER

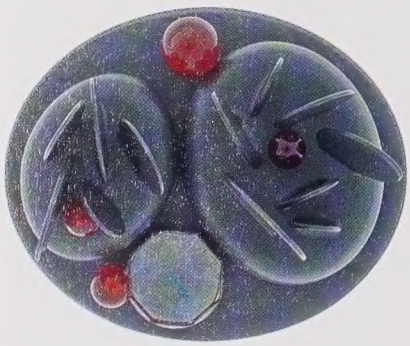
Nathan Blank in his studio with a recent sculpture.
PHOTO: JONATHAN HELLER



Nathan Blank at the forge of his North Carolina studio.



Petraea (sculptural vessel), 2007
steel, wrought iron, concrete, patinas, masonry dyes
38 x 12 x 12"
PHOTO: TOM MILLS



ANGELA BUBASH
Fin #3 (brooch), 2009
sterling silver, carnelian, dyed feathers
1 ½ x 1 ¼ x 1"
PHOTO: JONATHAN HELLER

pomanders to invite contemplation of our most absurd and ritualistic human efforts, Bubash invites the viewer to gently examine, filling in with his or her own unique connections. Blank's work as a sculptural blacksmith evokes a more environmental narrative through the creation of forms that include pedestal, floor, and wall pieces. Using an acid-etching technique, he is able to manipulate wrought iron surfaces until they look like wood. He also incorporates concrete that conjures eroded rock textures and a sense of place.

Both artists have a fascination with preciousness and capturing snapshots that allude to a greater whole. Where Blank's manipulation of steel surfaces functions as an ode to the passage of time and the impact of our natural world, Bubash's encapsulation of everything from cremation ashes to tiny seed pods functions as a call to preservation of the fleeting. In either case, we are asked to look closely and take pause. "Transitions are often the most critical," says Bubash. "In nature, there's the stem and the flower, but what's in between that? Those beautiful curves and lines are really critical to design." Or as Blank observes, "When I was growing up, the only things that were not antique in my house were the microwave and the TV. Your environment eventually shows up in your work, and there is always a blending of imagery there. Now I see myself making forms that appear more precious than the actual thing because I'm reinterpreting it for others to look at in a new way."

Ask them where their deepest affinities lay, and the answer is clear: in their studios.

Looking ahead, the couple has been inspired by the many successful studio artists in the surrounding Western North Carolina region. Their mutual desire for studio time, success through sustainable lifestyles, and well-crafted work will remain their priorities for now.

Furthermore
www.angelabubash.com
www.nathan-blank.com

Katey Schultz, a North Carolina-based writer, specializes in essays about the creative process and edits for literary journals Silk Road, Main Street Rag, *and* Memoir (and).

Angela Bubash working at her studio's soldering station, and a view of her jeweler's bench
PHOTO: JONATHAN HELLER

New Zealand
Small but Strong

BY DAMIAN SKINNER

THE STORY OF New Zealand contemporary jewelry is, like the settlement of New Zealand itself, a tale of successive waves of peoples and cultures washing onto the shores of a far-flung group of islands. New Zealand contemporary jewelry draws on resources that include Pacific and Maori adornment and European modernism—with an important dose of "the new jewelry" and a strong awareness of contemporary developments in Europe.

The Maori are a Pacific people who settled in New Zealand around 1200 AD. There are many similarities between Maori and other Pacific cultures, in language, social structures, and religion. First contact between the indigenous Maori and Europeans took place in 1642, when Dutch explorer Abel Tasman reached New Zealand, followed by British explorer James Cook in 1769. European settlers began to arrive soon after, and in 1840 a treaty was signed between the Maori and the British crown. Nowadays Europeans in New Zealand are known as *Pakeha*, a Maori word that describes how European settlers and their descendants have been changed by their experience of living in a new land, in close contact with Maori culture.

Exterior of the non-profit gallery Objectspace, in Auckland.

Contemporary jewelry in New Zealand began with the arrival of a group of European-born and -trained jewelers in the 1960s. (Before this time, the Arts and Crafts movement imported from England influenced the production of handmade jewelry, but this work doesn't connect easily with what came later.) Kobi Bosshard was Swiss, Günther Taemmler was German, Jens Hansen was Danish and Tanya Ashken was British. Arriving as part of a larger postwar migration, these gold- and silversmiths brought with them the skills and materials of European jewelry, laying down the framework for contemporary work in New Zealand. While this generation of European jewelers worked with precious materials, they rejected conventional jewelry's association with wealth and status, seeing jewelry as a vehicle for artistic expression and the exploration of the relationship between object and wearer.

New Zealand jewelry ... is inflected by history and place in a way that is distinctive and notable, in a world where globalization is producing "European melting-pot jewelry" made everywhere of the same ingredients.

In the 1980s, a number of self-taught jewelers started to work with natural materials. The Bone Stone Shell movement—so-called because of the 1988 museum exhibition "Bone Stone Shell: New Jewellery New Zealand" that toured internationally—looked for alternative ways to treat natural materials, favoring the existing structures like the rim of the shell, as well as paying close attention to Pacific adornment, a millennia-old design tradition of jewelry in natural materials like shell. Notably, the critique of preciousness that swept international jewelry in the 1970s and 1980s became, in New Zealand, a stimulus for bestowing preciousness on a group of materials that weren't previously viewed as such. Gold and diamonds gave way to *paua* (a type of abalone) and pearl shell, to bone and stone. Preciousness wasn't overthrown; it was refurbished, and given a new life in a kind of tribal jewelry that spoke powerfully and directly to the identity of urban New Zealanders.

More recently, there has been a shift in New Zealand contemporary jewelry, brought about by the graduates of the craft courses established in polytechnics in the 1980s. These new jewelers became involved in contemporary jewelry after the heyday of the objects and materials celebrated in the "Bone Stone Shell" exhibition, and they were generally interested in other aspects of jewelry and its history. In broad terms, New Zealand contemporary jewelry gave up trying to create powerful statements of identity, and began to think about other issues as well. Where identity is tackled, it is handled

lightly, less intensely—one could say with more irony, with a greater awareness of the constructed nature of identity and the compromised, sometimes clichéd, signs that nations use to present themselves.

The history of New Zealand contemporary jewelry has also been shaped by the emergence of Maori and Pacific Island jewelers who also attended the craft courses established in the 1980s. Working with the techniques, materials, and strategies of contemporary jewelry, these artists critique the assumptions of New Zealand contemporary jewelry, such as the idea that appropriating the forms and materials of Maori and Pacific Island adornment can create Pakeha or New Zealand identity. Their jewelry also asks important questions about what Maori and Pacific art and identity might be in the present, and how these cultures will continue to grow and develop in the future.

All of this history comes to rest in a contemporary jewelry scene that is relatively strong, considering that New Zealand is a small country of 103,738 square miles and a population of 4.5 million people. There are five institutions that offer a mixture of contemporary jewelry and manufacturing jewelry qualifications: three in Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand; one in Porirua, just north of the capital city Wellington; and one in Dunedin in the South Island.[1] In 2008 there were more than 80 students studying jewelry around the country, and 31 graduates with qualifications in contemporary or manufacturing jewelry.

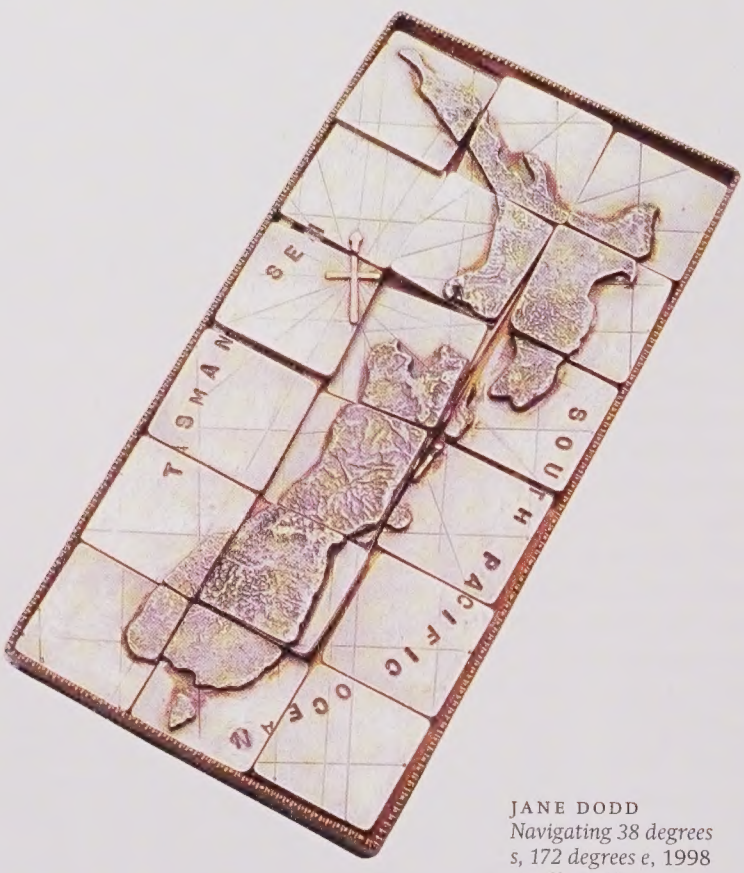
Three institutions actively collect contemporary jewelry: Te Papa Tongarewa, the Museum of New Zealand, in Wellington; The New Dowse in Lower Hutt (near Wellington); and the Auckland Museum. None of these collections are comprehensive, and currently no New Zealand art gallery or museum has a member of staff with a significant knowledge of contemporary jewelry history and practice. Contemporary jewelry is most notably supported by Objectspace in Auckland, a gallery funded by Creative New Zealand (the government arts funding body) to explore and promote the various forms of object-making nationally. Objectspace not only pays attention to various aspects of historical and contemporary jewelry practice through exhibitions, publications, and talks, but also locates jewelry within a wider dialogue about craft in New Zealand. Jewelry exhibitions also occasionally occur in other public venues around the country. The small but steady stream of publications dealing with contemporary jewelry suggests that the scene and its supporting infrastructure are basically healthy. Contemporary jewelry practice is nationally supported through the Crafts Board of Creative New Zealand, and individuals as well as institutions can apply for funding.

Fingers Contemporary Jewelry in Auckland is New Zealand's most significant

Installation of exhibition, "Lisa Walker: Unwearable" at Objectspace, Auckland, 6 September–4 October 2008.

OCTAVIA COOK
An Inheritance of Monumental Sentiment, 2009
acrylic, epoxy resin, 24k gold, 18k gold, sterling silver
3 ¾ x 5 ⅛"
PHOTO: MARK SMITH

WARWICK FREEMAN
Souvenir Necklace, 2005
wood, lacquer, silver
2 ¾ x 5 ¾"
PHOTO: STUDIO LA GONDA



JANE DODD
Navigating 38 degrees s, 172 degrees e, 1998
sterling silver, fine silver, 18k gold
3 ½ x 2 ⅜"
PHOTO: STUDIO LA GONDA

ELENA GEE
Necklace, 1986
shell, plastic, wool, titanium
4 ½ x 3 ⅛" (pendant)
PHOTO: STUDIO LA GONDA

retail gallery. Established in 1974 as a cooperative, it still represents most of the major contemporary jewelers in New Zealand. The other notable jewelry galleries are Quoil in Wellington, The National in Christchurch, and Lure in Dunedin. Contemporary jewelry is also sold in craft galleries, including Masterworks in Auckland, Avid in Wellington, and Form in Christchurch. All of these outlets follow the model of retail stores rather than fine art galleries, with exhibition space for new work or featured exhibitions being located alongside stock. Relatively little New Zealand jewelry is exhibited or sold through the fine art dealer gallery system, although artists Warwick Freeman, Areta Wilkinson, and Octavia Cook are represented by dealers and show their work in fine art as well as craft venues. There are very few significant collectors of New Zealand contemporary jewelry, with the majority of sales going to people who intend to wear their purchases. While some major fine art collectors buy contemporary jewelry, it is unclear what relationship it has to the rest of their collections. Unlike fine art, there is no secondary market for contemporary jewelry in New Zealand, although auction houses have begun to create one.

New Zealand contemporary jewelry has historically been quite insular in outlook. Few jewelers exhibit their work internationally, and only two, Warwick Freeman and Lisa Walker, have achieved significant international reputations. Freeman began exhibiting in the Netherlands in 1989, and was awarded the prestigious Françoise Van Den Bosch prize in 2002, while Walker studied at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts with Otto Künzli, and has achieved notable success within the European jewelry community.

It would seem, however, that this attitude is changing. A number of pathways to Australia and further afield have opened up, sustained by a network of New Zealanders who have made it globally and international jewelers and writers who have a reasonable affection and interest in what is happening in New Zealand. It is becoming clear that New Zealand jewelry can, if the work is good enough, find a place within the international jewelry scene, and that its distinctive qualities might have relevance and resonance beyond the country's borders.

The art school at the Otago Polytechnic, Dunedin
PHOTO: MAX OETTLI

In a recent essay, Dutch art historian Liesbeth den Besten wrote positively of the regional quality of New Zealand contemporary jewelry, "where people combine a strong sense of place with an awareness of ancestry, due to the bicultural character of this geographically isolated society." New Zealand jewelry, in her opinion, is inflected by history and place in a way that is distinctive and notable, in a world where globalization is producing "European melting-pot jewelry" made everywhere of the same ingredients. Den Besten concluded by wondering when "authenticity" created from a connection to place and history might begin to affect the contemporary jewelry scene.[2] What den Besten calls authenticity is a quality that is found in generous quantities in New Zealand contemporary jewelry, and which might prove to be the bridge between the adornment of this small country in the Pacific and the rest of the world.

Damian Skinner, an art historian based in Gisborne, New Zealand, is curator of the "Pocket Guide to New Zealand Jewelry" exhibition, which is touring the United States in 2010.

1. These are Unitec, Manukau School of Visual Arts (MSVA), and Hungry Creek Art and Craft School in Auckland; Whitireia Polytechnic in Porirua; and Otago Polytechnic in Dunedin. Jewelry students can complete BA degrees at Unitec, MSVA, Whitireia Polytechnic and Otago Polytechnic, while certificates and diplomas in manufacturing jewelry are offered at MSVA and Hungry Creek.
2. Liesbeth den Besten, "Academy Hopping," in Carole Guinard, ed., *From Hand to Hand: Passing on Skill and Know-How in European Contemporary Jewellery* (Lausanne: MUDAC, 2008) pp. 54-5.

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Todd Reed
The Thrill of it All

I'VE CHOSEN ARTISTS and pieces that transcend what art jewelry or conceptual jewelry or commercial jewelry is and should be. It was important to me that these works be commercially available, and also unique in their design, style, craftsmanship, and sensitivity to materials. These pieces would grace the collection of any museum. I also really wanted to highlight some amazing artists who are lesser known. The working styles of these designers range from one person doing everything (in the case of Judith Kaufman), to more than 100 jewelers working together (as with Sevan), and lots of interesting and fabulous efforts in between. These works thrill me with their potential to transcend the "normal," or expected. Truth is, I love design, I love jewelry, I love it all! And this is just a small sampling of the wonderful and cool artists who are making exciting work today.

NICHOLAS VARNEY
Sunflower Brooch, 2005
peridot, tourmaline, beryl, freshwater pearls, moonstone, white diamonds, 18k yellow gold
diameter 3"

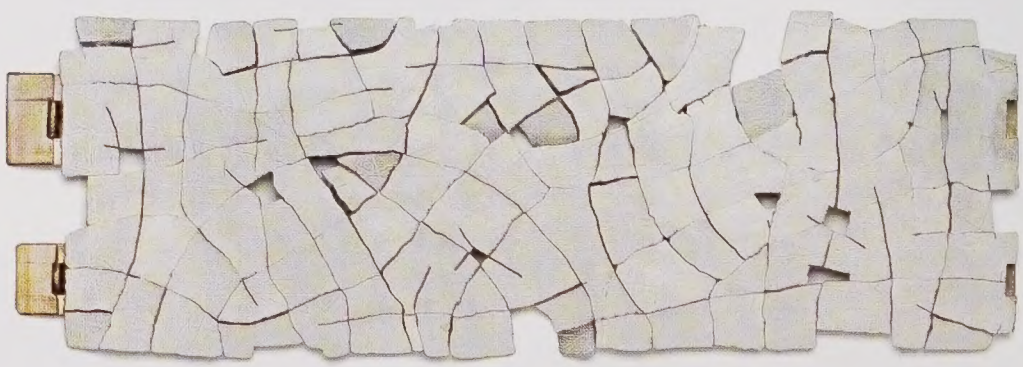
MANYA AND ROUMEN
Dove on a Walnut Branch (ring).
2009
sterling silver, emeralds, rubies,
gold-plating

TIM MCLELLAND
Idea in Eden (brooch), 2005
18k yellow gold, tourmaline,
Shakudo enamel
1 5/8 x 1"

SEVAN
Angel Ring, 2009
24k gold, sterling silver, black diamonds, white diamonds, aquamarines, hand painted micro-mosaic tiles, carved quartz intaglio of an angel

ATELIER ZOBEL, PETER SCHMID
Bracelet, 2006
sterling silver, 22k and 24k gold, turquoise, lapis lazuli, diamonds
width 2"

JOHN IVERSON
Cutting Free (bracelet), 2009
18k yellow gold, sterling silver
7 ¼ x 2 ½"
PHOTO: ROBERT HENSLEIGH



ECLAT JEWELS
Icy Diamond Necklace, 2007–8
18k white gold, with icy, rose-cut, and pave diamonds

Furthermore
www.toddreed.com
www.mc2jewels.com
www.manyaandroumen.com
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Ron Arad and the Eleganc

Exhibition installation view, "Ron Arad: No Discipline," The Museum of Modern Art, New York August 2–October 19, 2009

# of Mutation

BY AKIKO BUSCH

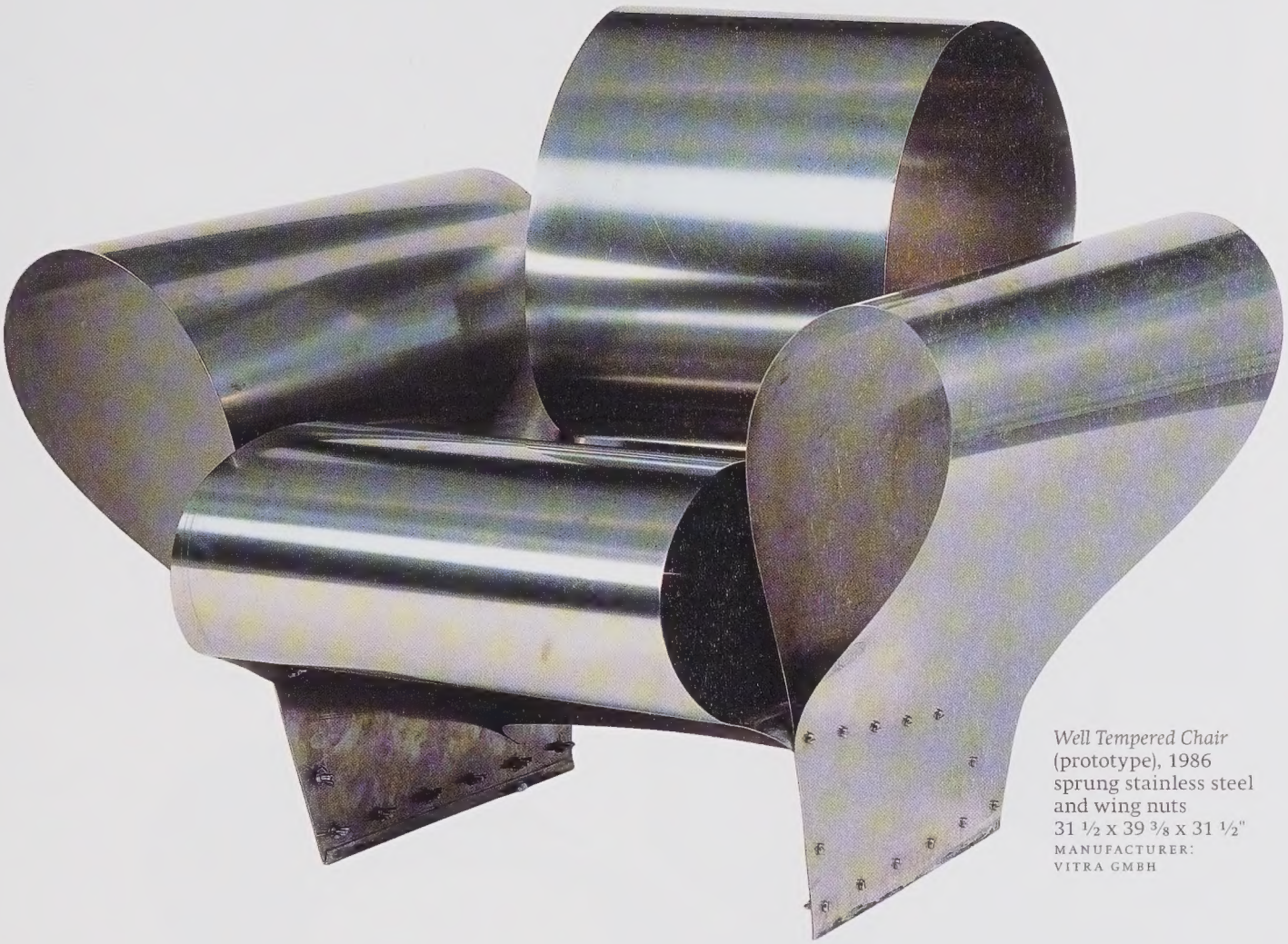
Looming Lloyd, 1989
stainless steel,
and patinated steel
36 ¼ x 41 5/16 x 25 9/16"
MANUFACTURER: ONE OFF LTD.
AND RON ARAD ASSOCIATES

If furniture design is where the work begins, it also intersects with art, sculpture, industrial design, craft, and architecture.... This is flow in the material world.

THE EMINENT PSYCHOLOGIST Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has spent more than two decades researching the science of flow, a concept defined in his book, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, as "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it." The idea has proved useful to other psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists in their efforts to explain individual and group behavior. "Some have extended the implications of flow to attempts to understand the evolution of mankind," writes Csikszentmihalyi, "others to illuminate religious experience."

And then there's the flow theory of furniture design, which the Israeli architect, designer, and sculptor Ron Arad has pretty much covered since he established his studio, One Off, in London in 1981, and later, in 1989, Ron Arad Associates. Since 1997 Arad has also headed the Department of Design Products at London's Royal College of Art. Throughout, he's been an advocate of mutant design, of the a-hat-is-a-wave-is-a-chair school. Forms are liquid, fluid, extreme. Anything and everything is capable of morphing: ideas, objects, function, and materials, among them stainless steel, inflated aluminum, resins, Corian, acrylic, Fiberglas, carbon fiber, plywood, injection-molded polypropylene, polyethylene, old car seats, and antennas. Digital technology intersects with handwork. And if furniture design is where the work begins, it also intersects with art, sculpture, industrial design, craft, and architecture. Honestly, who's keeping track and who cares? This is flow in the material world.

A recent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City ("Ron Arad: No Discipline") was occasion to review his work, and it was clear from the outset that Arad



Well Tempered Chair
(prototype), 1986
sprung stainless steel
and wing nuts
31 ½ x 39 ⅜ x 31 ½"
MANUFACTURER:
VITRA GMBH

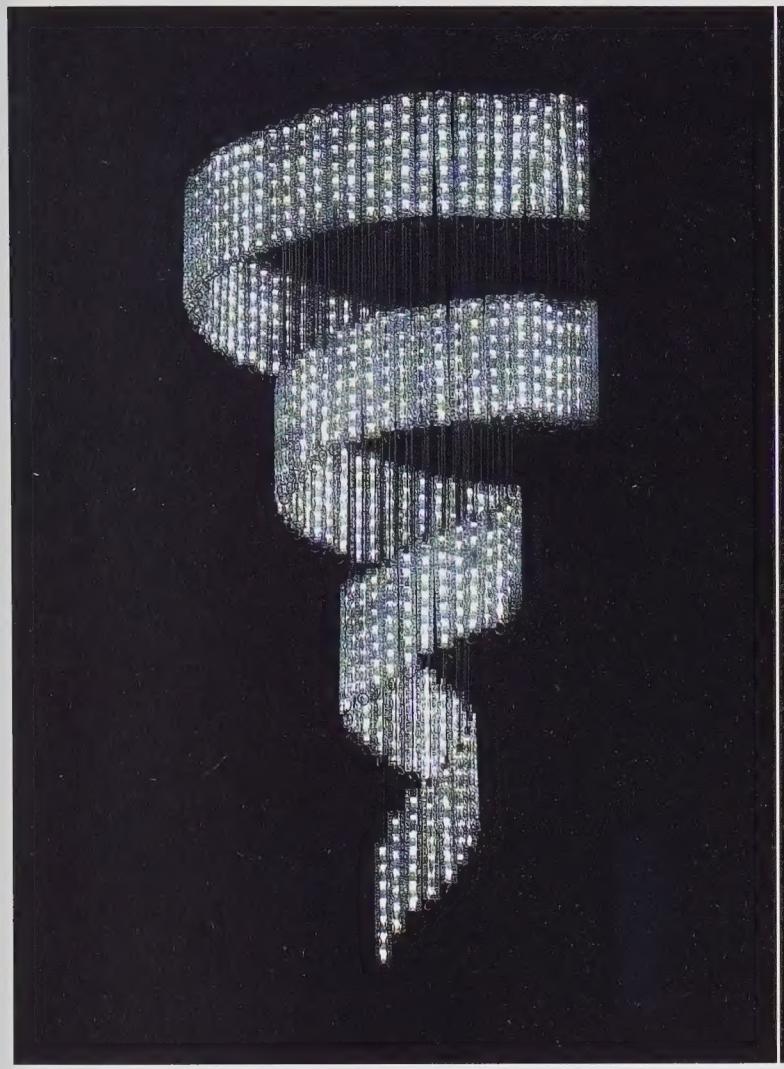
is the Dr. Seuss of metal arts. Or maybe it's more like the Cat in the Hat's brother who went to design school. There is the same unexpected logic, rhythms, rhymes, perverse and unpredictable associations, all of which make for a lavish romp. There is the same kind of improvisational glee, some hybrid of curiosity and ruthlessness, an irrepressible chaos that all works out in the end. And the idea that there is no discipline is utter nonsense, not that it matters in the slightest; creative people always have a good time contradicting themselves.

While the biomorphic forms of the furniture may drip and run and ripple and flow, the odd thing is that for all the pools and puddles, there is an attendant elegance. The *Narrow Papardelle Chair* (1992), constructed of a kind of steel mesh, rolls itself out like a conveyor belt, making the case that a chair is not a place to sit still, but some kind of weird delivery system; not static but kinetic, seating with its own sense of forward movement and momentum. Furniture, it suggests, can unfold just as fluidly and precisely as can an idea or relationship or life.

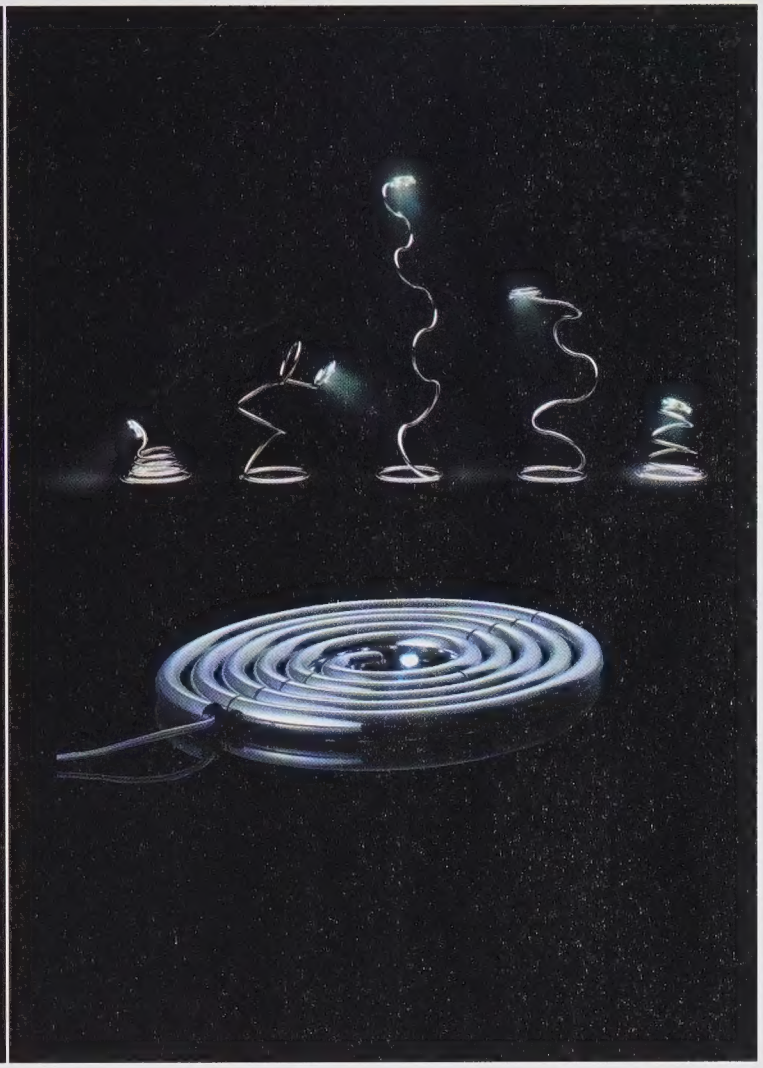
Then there is the *Bookworm Shelf* (1993) for Kartell, undoubtedly one of the few pieces in the history of furniture design whose sales can be measured in kilometers. While the piece brings new meaning to the idea of bouncing off the walls, it also has an undeniable grace, not to mention logic. The flexible, plastic shelf (conceived in sprung steel but manufactured in injection-molded PVC) can be shaped to snake across your wall in pretty much any way you want, making for a swoopy configuration that speaks to the way one book can lead you to another, or to things, one idea, up, down or across to the next. If your books are poorly organized or if you believe a library can be a moving, swerving, animated collection of ideas, then this is for you. Which brings us back to

There is the same unexpected logic, rhythms, rhymes, perverse and unpredictable associations, all of which make for a lavish romp.

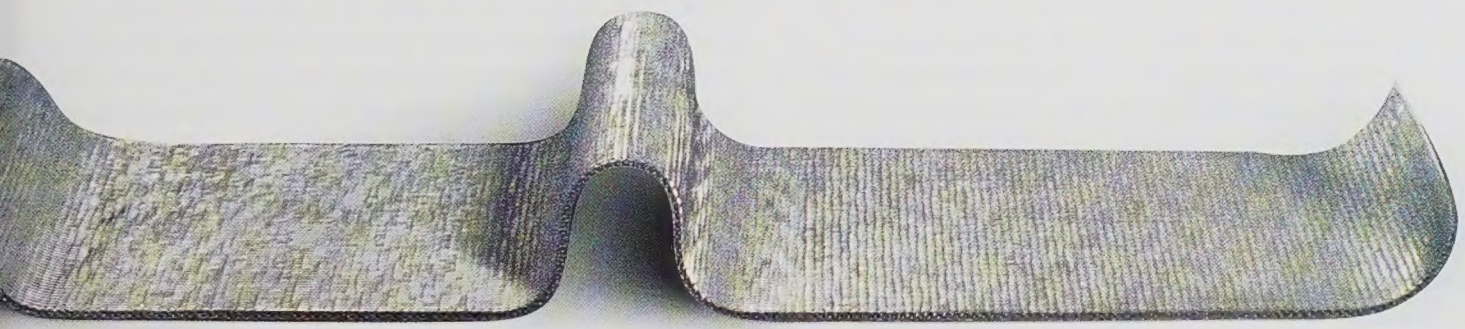
Narrow Papardelle, 1992
woven stainless
steel mesh and steel
42 x 16 x 118 ⅛"
MANUFACTURER: ONE OFF LTD.



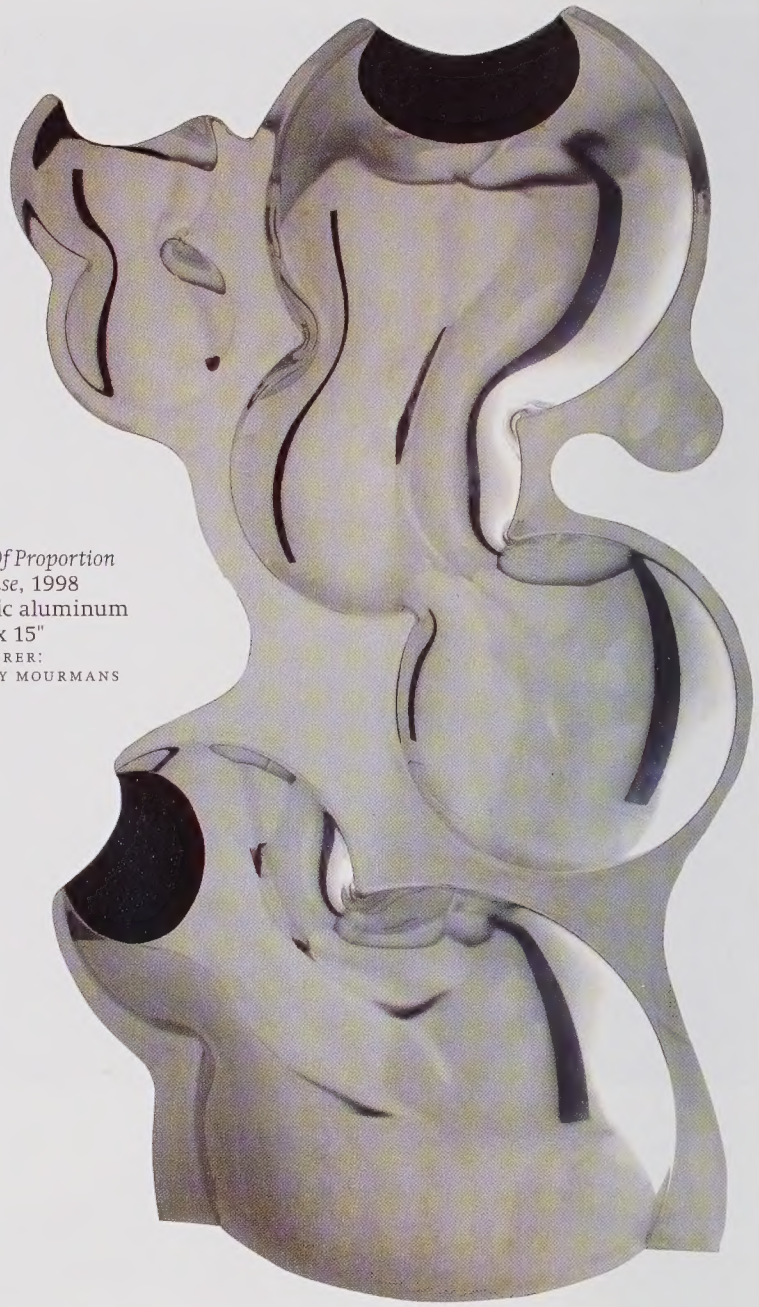
Lolita, 2004
Crystals and LEDs
59 x 43 ¼"
MANUFACTURER: SWAROVSKI AND RON ARAD



PizzaKobra, 2007
chromed steel,
aluminum, and LEDs
extended 28 ⅞ x 10 ¼"
MANUFACTURER: IGUZZINI ILLUMINAZIONE S.P.A.



Large Bookworm, 1993
Tempered sprung steel
and patinated steel
length approx 50 feet
MANUFACTURER: ONE OFF LTD.



Blown Out Of Proportion (B.O.O.P.) Vase, 1998
superplastic aluminum
92 x 59 ½ x 15"
MANUFACTURER:
THE GALLERY MOURMANS

Dr. Seuss: "It is fun to have fun/but you have to know how/I can hold up the cup/and the milk and the cake!/I can hold up the books!/And the fish and a rake!"

For all the weirdness here, there is also a kind of universally engaging quality not all that different from that of the noodle art my kids did in preschool, when they sprayed gold paint on pasta bow ties, wagon wheels, tortellini, and rotini, then strung them all together. They were great. Curvy pieces of pasta with a shiny, metallic finish have a kind of universal appeal that lie beyond my powers of explanation. Maybe it has to do with giving an unexpected industrial finish to fluid, organic shapes, but you just kind of go with it. And the association with preschool pasta art isn't as condescending as it sounds; it's clear that Arad has a perfectly healthy and serious respect for the process of play.

That engaging quality may also have to do with the sense of fit so implicit in much of the work. Things are designed to accommodate the physical world, whether it is a wall, a floor, a table, a CD, a bottle, a room, or a human being. The *Soundtrack CD Holder (1998)*, the *Infinity Bottle Rack* (1999), the *PizzaKobra Light (2007)*—if all of these pieces morph and mutate, spin and spiral, it is usually because they are trying to accommodate something. The rippling form of a chair is what allows it to stack so neatly. A different sense of fit is conveyed by *Thumbprint* (2007), a chair crafted from polished stainless steel rods that suggests it was formed by the impression of some giant supernatural and oddly benevolent digit.

The sense of accommodation can be more psychic as well. The *Lolita* chandelier (2004), a ribbon of light made with 2,100 crystals and 1,050 LEDs, is a glittering corkscrew capable of displaying text messages; as the messages are displayed down the ribbon of light, the chandelier appears to gently spin, the glitter and gleam of a word or sentence read, an idea communicated.

Southern Hemisphere, 2007
patinated superplastic aluminum
51 x 52 x 52"
MANUFACTURER:
THE GALLERY MOURMANS

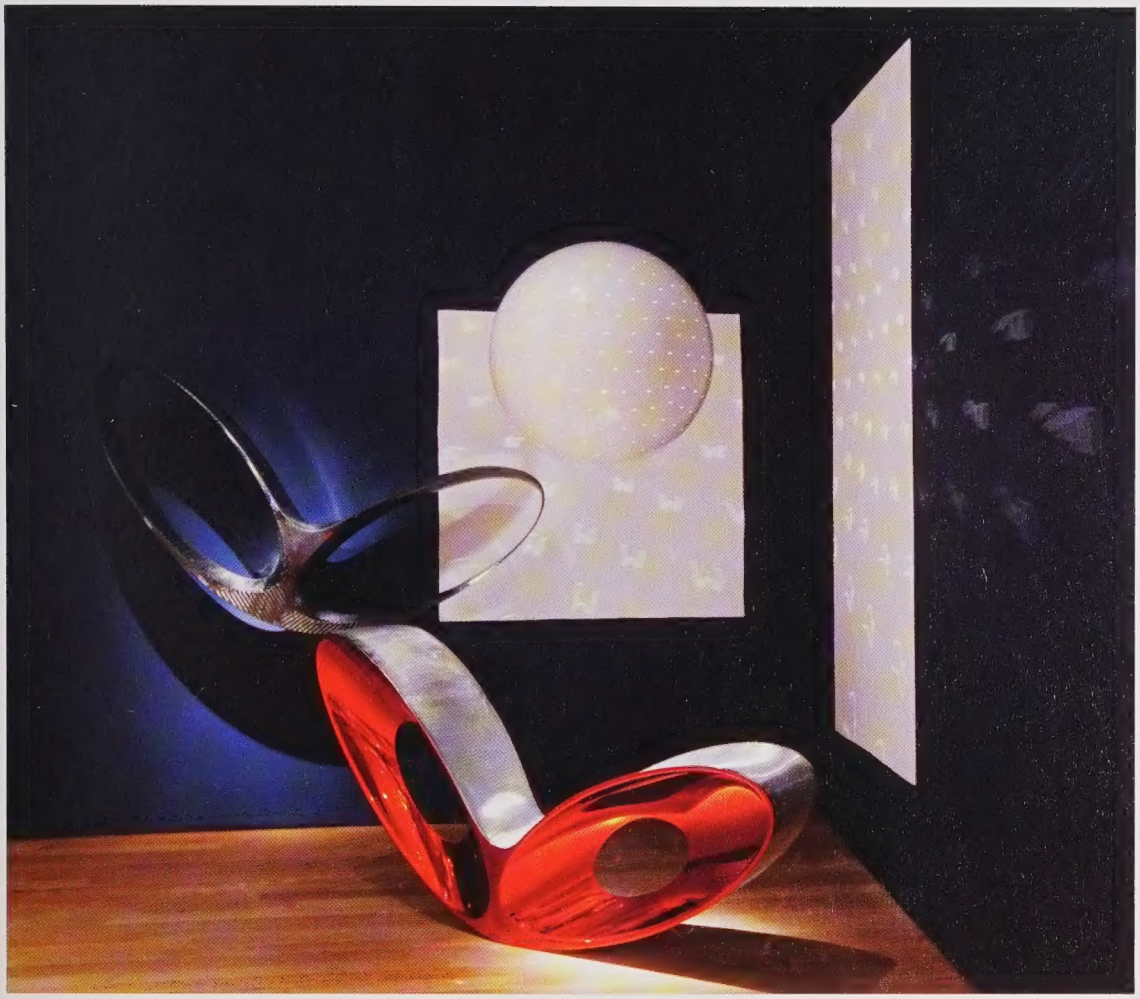
Things are designed to accommodate the physical world, whether it is a wall, a floor, a table, a CD, a bottle, a room, or a human being.

Arad's work requires a certain sympathy for extravagance; a colleague I ran into at the exhibition went so far as to call it "bombastic design. It has no filter," he said. But that's always the case with exaggeration; if the statement has meaning, then exaggeration can make a point. It's a perfectly legitimate mode of narrative; even the most extreme hyperbole is capable of telling the truth, highlighting or underlining or going over the top or in some way or other contributing to meaning in some loud, overt, excessive way. Fine. But if the meaning is thin to begin with, then the exaggeration just comes off as hollow, a little tinny. *Looming Lloyd* (1989) simply attaches metal "clogs" to any four-legged chair, repositioning it as airborne, which isn't much of a description but still makes it sound more interesting than it is.

The strength of Arad's work sometimes depends on the installation. *Paved with Good Intentions* (2005) is a mirror-polished, laser-cut stainless steel, crystal-clear pool of a table with different configurations that can climb the walls. But it was made for an installation that included 69 such tables, and once you know these tables were designed not as a puddle but as a lake, well, you want the whole lake. At times, too, it looks dated. I state this complaint to a friend. "So what," she mutters. "Sottsass looks dated too sometimes. He looks fresh, then he doesn't, then he does again. He goes in and out of fashion. That's all part of it." She's right. It's all just another part of the mutation, which is to say, it's just part of the flow.

The Shadow of Time clock announces the hour by light, the elusive clock face cast on the wall. Maybe the idea of the shadows of time is obvious, but it still speaks genuinely and clearly to the human experience of time and the constant acceleration and compression of time that most of us occupants of the early twenty-first century have some passing familiarity with. But then again, there is something about the plunging, veering shapes in all of

Low Table 34, *Table* 48, and *Table 57*, 2005
from "Paved with Good Intentions" Series
mirror-polished, laser-cut stainless steel
dimensions variable
MANUFACTURER: RON ARAD



Installation view with *Bio-Void 1* chair (2006), and *I.P.C.O. (Inverted Pinhole Camera Obscura)* (2001), The Museum of Modern Art, New York

There is something about the plunging, veering shapes in all of this work, something in the swooping, twirling, looping forms that speaks to the pulse and rhythm of contemporary experience at large.

this work, something in the swooping, twirling, looping forms that speaks to the pulse and rhythm of contemporary experience at large.

And I wonder if, more than anything else, this is the quality that gives Arad's work its relevance and resonance. *Evergreen!*, designed for a development in Tokyo, is street furniture reconsidered as a Mobius strip of bronze piping and ivy, a wave of metal work and plant life, a bench that veers through the organic and synthetic with a kind of loopy rhythm of its own. Mutation, it gaily reminds us, is a central metaphor for contemporary life in this century. Erasing the boundaries between disciplines, hybrid materials, high and low, hand work embedded with new technologies—all of these figure into the work of many contemporary artists and designers, but what Arad manages to convey most of all is this sense of motion and instantaneity, of things forever changing, of the situation constantly being turned around, upended, utterly revised without any notice.

Csikszentmihalyi suggests that the state of flow is the ability "to find meaning in the ongoing stream of experience," which isn't all that different from what Arad's work tries to reflect. That we live in a world in which nothing stays the same for very long can often be cause for disconnect and distress, but seen through Arad's eyes and experienced through his work, we see how it can be cause for pleasure and comfort as well.

Akiko Busch writes about design, culture, and nature for a variety of publications, and her most recent book is Nine Ways to Cross a River *(Bloomsbury/USA).*

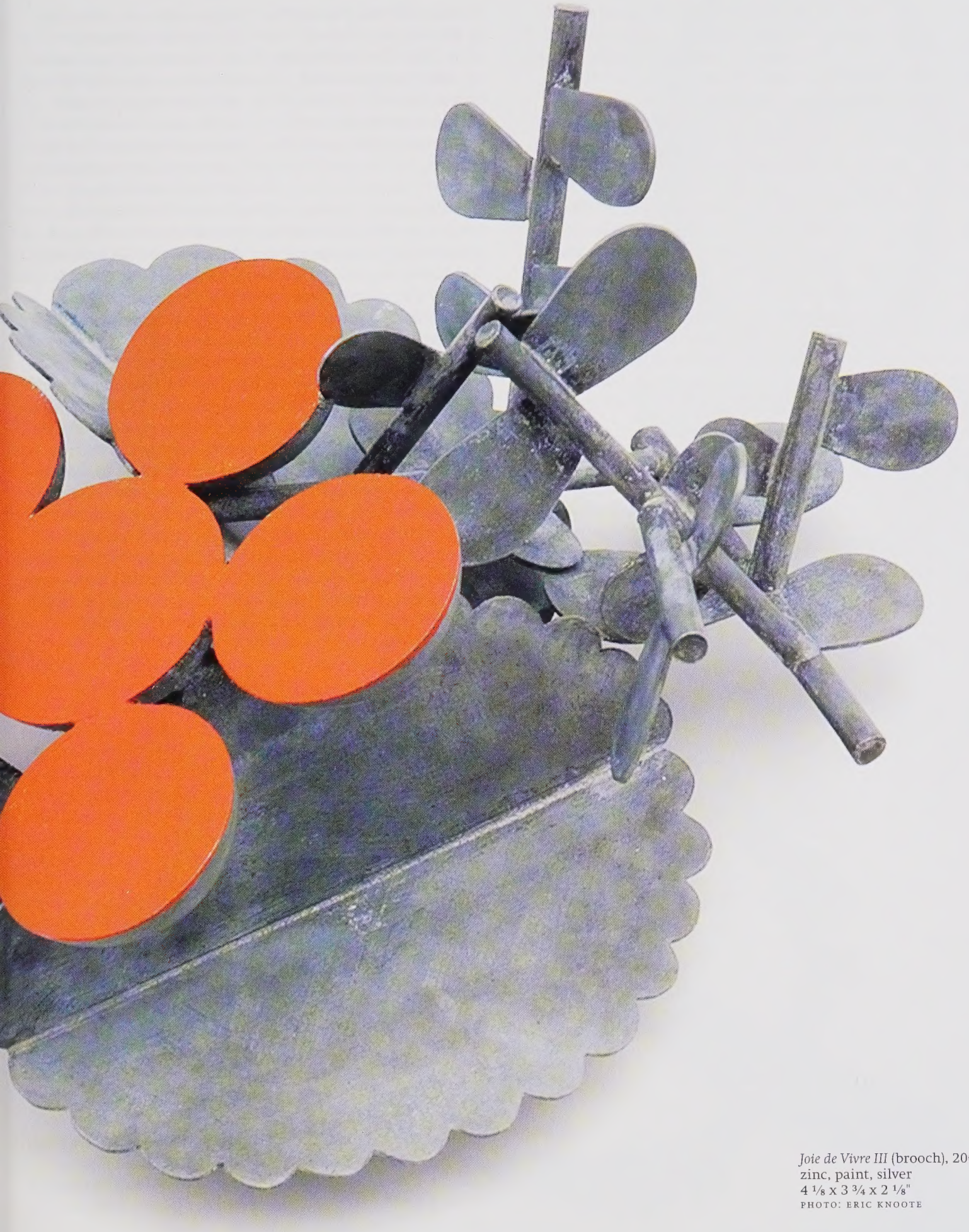
Furthermore
www.moma.org/ronarad
www.ronarad.com

Lucy Sarneel

Like Found Objects in My Mind

BY LIESBETH DEN BESTEN

Loving Spoonful (wall object with necklace), 2006
zinc, wood, antique textile on rubber, thread
18 x 5 x 1 ¾"
PHOTO: ERIC KNOOTE



Joie de Vivre III (brooch), 2008
zinc, paint, silver
4 1/8 x 3 3/4 x 2 1/8"
PHOTO: ERIC KNOOTE

NIGHT FLIGHT IS A REMARKABLE piece of jewelry. This necklace, constructed of grey zinc parts connected with thread, combines the image of a plane with curled flowers and leaves; hidden fluorescent beads light up in the dark. This blend of mechanical and organic, manmade and natural, is typical of Lucy Sarneel's power of imagination. It is a confident and intriguing sculptural necklace, made in 1998, during a period when Sarneel discovered her artistic language: bold, abstract, and associative.

Born in Maastricht in 1961, Sarneel is one of those quiet artists who has been working under the lee of her own practice for many years to establish a substantial body of unique and recognizable work. Her use of metals, especially zinc and steel, is quite exceptional, as is her enlistment of antique fabrics. One could say that her jewelry is very Dutch, although one has to be careful with concepts such as "Dutchness" or national identity. While Sarneel's work is strongly rooted in a Dutch tradition of abstraction and conceptualization, it has a narrative and spiritual side as well.

Sarneel was educated in a rather radical atmosphere, characterized by "de-learning"—leaving everything one's learned behind to start from scratch—in the jewelry department of Amsterdam's Gerrit Rietveld Academy under the lead of Onno Boekhoudt. She had studied jewelry for the previous three years at the Academy in Maastricht, which offered a rather conventional goldsmith's curriculum. In her eyes, goldsmithing was magical, but after some years it began to feel constricting; she wasn't allowed to work large-scale or to make the objects she envisioned. Boekhoudt was known for his autonomous objects in different materials, and when Sarneel entered the Rietveld Academy in 1985 she landed in a completely different world. There students were no longer making "jewelry," which was taboo—an attitude stemming from the short and heated history of contemporary artist jewelry in the Netherlands. Boekhoudt turned against the closed Modernist Dutch jewelry system, which excluded him for years, and he became more interested in the sculptural potential of the discipline. At the academy, students first had to develop their own artistic language by working on various assignments. This practice, including rare but intense reviews with the teachers, completely rattled Sarneel. And so she turned to painting—and discovered that she was talented at creating atmospheres and environments. At one point, Sarneel made a room with painted panels, a floor, and a very small entrance. It was her answer to the uncertainty she felt at the jewelry department, and her teachers had to endure great difficulty in order to see it. Already at this early stage she formed her goals: "I wanted to make objects and jewelry, in this combination. Either one of them was too one-sided. When I began making jewelry again, I discovered that I could actually combine them."[1]

While Sarneel's work is strongly rooted in a Dutch tradition of abstraction and conceptualization, it has a narrative and spiritual side as well.

Night Flight (necklace), 1998
zinc, fabric cord, phosphorescent beads, silver
diameter 8 5/8"
PHOTO: RON ZIJLSTRA

From the very start Sarneel was an anomaly: figuration was her language in a period when Dutch jewelry was in a rather cramped position, still trying to free itself from the revolutionary set of dogmas and ideas established in the 1970s, that promoted the use of geometric abstraction, industrial materials, and a non-crafted expression. Sarneel's work should not be interpreted solely as a reaction towards this aesthetic, but there was definitely a reactionary aspect to her work at that time. "I felt the need to communicate; through figuration I found a more universal language," she says. "A series of little zinc cabinets titled "Badge of Distinction" (1991–92) features an abundance of materials and abstract and figurative forms in free compositions, combined with and responding to reproductions of well-known Renaissance portraits. Sarneel's series of silver "Chair" rings (1992) shows both her interest in history and the everyday. Her *Desideria* necklace (1989), the only jewelry piece she presented at her Rietveld Academy graduation show, might be interpreted as a personal manifesto. Desire is expressed in a powerful yet scrawny composition: four heavy steel crowns are connected with wire and tube-like elements of lead filled with paper rolls. The piece had nothing to do with traditional notions of desire, and it showed her preference for the "objectness" of jewelry.

Sarneel used a lot of paper during this period, often rolling it up or compressing it as a reference to letters and diaries, as if these tubes might be filled with personal texts and secrets by the wearer. This idea is perfectly expressed in the *Archive* brooch (1993), a baroque composition of silver, gold, and steel holding a real miniature paper archive map. The fact that the user could actually take possession of a piece was Sarneel's response to the then prevailing situation of jewelry, which she experienced as highly confusing.

Around the mid 1990s, when Sarneel's first daughter was born, nature as a source of inspiration became increasingly important. Organic forms in painted steel or zinc presented growth structures, like stumps or crystals. She became fascinated by the miracle of nature and the similarities between a precious jewel or diamond and other elements of nature: "It can completely absorb you; you can lose yourself in it," she says. *Decorative Stump* and *Stump Growth* (both 1998) have truncated parts, and combine rusty surfaces with highly polished ones. The complicated sculptural constructions are hollow, with each part attached in open connections to convey the underlying idea of "breathing." Both brooches are kept in custom-made boxes of the same material and color, and can be cherished as objects in their own right. In later works, spoons, monkeys, shells, traditional clothing, antique fabric, popsicle sticks, bows, flowers, and brushes all play their part alongside the prominent use of zinc. Sarneel's imagination seems boundless and offers room for the observer to associate freely. There may be stories hidden in these works, but they are not easily divined.

Sarneel's working process is as associative as her thoughts: "I never make sketches, I only take down notes: a word, a little scrawl," she says. "Most of the creative process

Top: *Desideria* (necklace), 1989
steel, treated paper, wrapped lead, steel filament, plastic, wood
diameter 11 ¾"
PHOTO: ROBERT SCHAEFFERS

Badge of Distinction
(brooch with cabinet), 1991–92
silver, gold, steel, boxwood, agate/zinc, photo of *Man Holding Ring* by Jan van Eyck
9 ½ x 8 x 1 ¾"
PHOTO: JAAP GIELING

Archive (brooch) 1993
silver, gold, steel, zinc, treated paper
4 x 2 ¾ x 1 ⅜"
PHOTO: RON ZIJLSTRA

Stump Growth (brooch), 1998
steel, gold, varnish, silver
2 x 2 x 1 ⅜"
PHOTO: RON ZIJLSTRA

happens at the workbench. Things blurb up in my head, like found objects in my mind. I start from nothing and one day something happens. A piece can be completed already in my head, I just have to make it." It is as if Sarneel is still amazed by this process herself.

Sarneel makes about five unique variations of a given piece. She calls it a "monk's work," which is the polite Dutch equivalent for "donkey work," expressing the value of seeing how a piece grows under or in your hands while working on it with great concentration. Sarneel attributes an almost magical force to jewelry: "A jewel feeds you and you give something back," she says. "Jewels are like energy containers. When I am working I put all my energy into the thing, but the thing must become itself and get a soul, start talking back to you. It is like the process of life; it is all about building up and letting go. It is fascinating."

Sarneel prefers working with zinc because of its symbolic connotations: 'It is a protecting material, used in construction for roofs and also to protect steel from corrosion; it is also in your body as a mineral and there it helps with respiration," she explains. "But this symbolism has become less important today. Actually I have to ask myself anew why I use this material." After thinking a moment, she reasons that zinc has a certain and beautiful moodiness; that it is silverish without having a specific expression (like silver or gold, which are always linked with luxury); that it has a neutrality while on the other hand a wonderful greyish color that refers to the (Dutch) sky and the sea. Sarneel employs a special treatment that she developed, using etching, milling and acids, to achieve its peculiar color: "The zinc I use is gloomy, but it is a gloominess full with a zest for living," she says.

The intense grey hue offers a perfect base for colorful additions, in the form of paint, antique fabrics, ribbons, beads, or occasionally minerals. The vibrant colors engage all kinds of personal and universal associations. *La double vie I* (the double life) of 2009 is a festive necklace with a soft melancholic undertone. The two oval parts (symbolizing fertility) covered with fabrics are essential in the foremost zinc composition, with beads, flowers, ribbons, and a large bow on the bottom. The antique fabric shows a detail of a tree of life motif, popular in Dutch traditional costume, while the black fabric refers to mourning. The flowers on the left are much more lively than those on the right, and the bow has strange protrusions that look like truncated stumps. The necklace is a celebration of life with all its sorrow. The playful necklace *Summer* (2000), one of Sarneel's few jewels without any zinc elements,

"Most of the creative process happens at the workbench. Things blurb up in my head, like found objects in my mind. I start from nothing and one day something happens. A piece can be completed already in my head, I just have to make it."

La Double Vie (necklace), 2009
zinc, nylon thread, antique textile on rubber, paint
diameter 7 7/8"
PHOTO: ERIC KNOOTE

Ornamental Garden (necklace), 2008
zinc, antique textile on rubber, nylon thread, paint
diameter 8 5/8"
PHOTO: ERIC KNOOTE

Onderonsje (Informal Chat)
necklace, 2008
zinc, nylon thread, red gold
diameter 6 ¾"
PHOTO: ERIC KNOOTE

Cross your Heart
(double brooch), 2003
silver, glass beads, antique textile, thread, postcard
9 x 7 7/8 x 1/2"
PHOTO: RON ZIJLSTRA

is composed of pink glass beads and popsicle sticks painted in cheerful pink, blue, red, yellow, and green, expressing the carefree gaiety of the season.

Within her jewelry, Sarneel tries to respond to the surrounding world, and to what she calls "real" things, things that really matter. As the world becomes smaller and gets more complex, Sarneel focuses on taking time, on attention and concentration. The artist's interest in traditional Dutch costume and Jewish cutting art is not due to their national or religious aspects, but because these art forms were created by people who want to produce something beautiful and lasting for their family or community. Says Sarneel, "The inherent simplification may look everyday [but]... the everyday is universal."

Folk art began to interest Sarneel around 2003, when she was inspired by the nearly lost traditional costumes in Dutch villages, especially on the former island of Marken near Amsterdam. The woman's dress used to be very colorful and layers of different cloth and embroidery were attached with simple pins. Pieces of these beautiful antique fabrics were passed on from mother to daughter. Today such cloth fragments are for sale, and Sarneel made a series of necklaces directly inspired by the square front of women's costumes. In these necklaces the antique fabrics take the lead, and are combined with zinc flowers or shells. Recently Sarneel made a *Mourning Piece*, with a grid of 18 triangular black cloth brooches that can be removed from the colorful lower layer, representing the process of diminished mourning. The *Mourning* piece is about the loss of old costume traditions, techniques, and materials. Today, these once-cherished antique Dutch fabrics are mainly collected by American needlework lovers. The patchwork pattern in Sarneel's necklace speaks to the history of import (the original fabrics were imported by the Dutch from India in the 17th and 18th centuries) and export (now they find their way to the U.S.) of textiles, and the ongoing process of elaboration through handiwork.

The artist's interest in traditional Dutch costume and Jewish cutting art is not due to their national or religious aspects, but because these art forms were created by people who want to produce something beautiful and lasting for their family or community.

Lucy Sarneel works in the best Dutch artistic tradition, in which abstraction and reduction are the thread, combined with a clear sense of expression. The unifying force of the greyish zinc, the conscious choice of materials and colors for their symbolic and narrative qualities, and the force of inner beauty that comes from the works themselves instead of from the sparkle of rich materials, is her response to typical Dutch virtues of abstraction, plainness, and humanity. But above all, Sarneel creates a world where things are transformed, presenting materials and forms that are familiar, connecting things that are seemingly unconnected.

As she prepares for a forthcoming solo show at Galerie Marzee in the Netherlands, Sarneel reflects on her evolving aesthetic. It is still fresh and new, but "maybe" she says, "it becomes more chaotic. This is more in line with my ideas about the world at this moment." Sarneel's ongoing concern with her changing forms of expression and creative sources will no doubt yield more magical objects.

Liesbeth den Besten is a Dutch art historian who works as a freelance writer and curator in the field of jewelry and crafts.

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1. This and all other artist quotes are from author's interview with Lucy Sarneel, Amsterdam, April 15, 2009

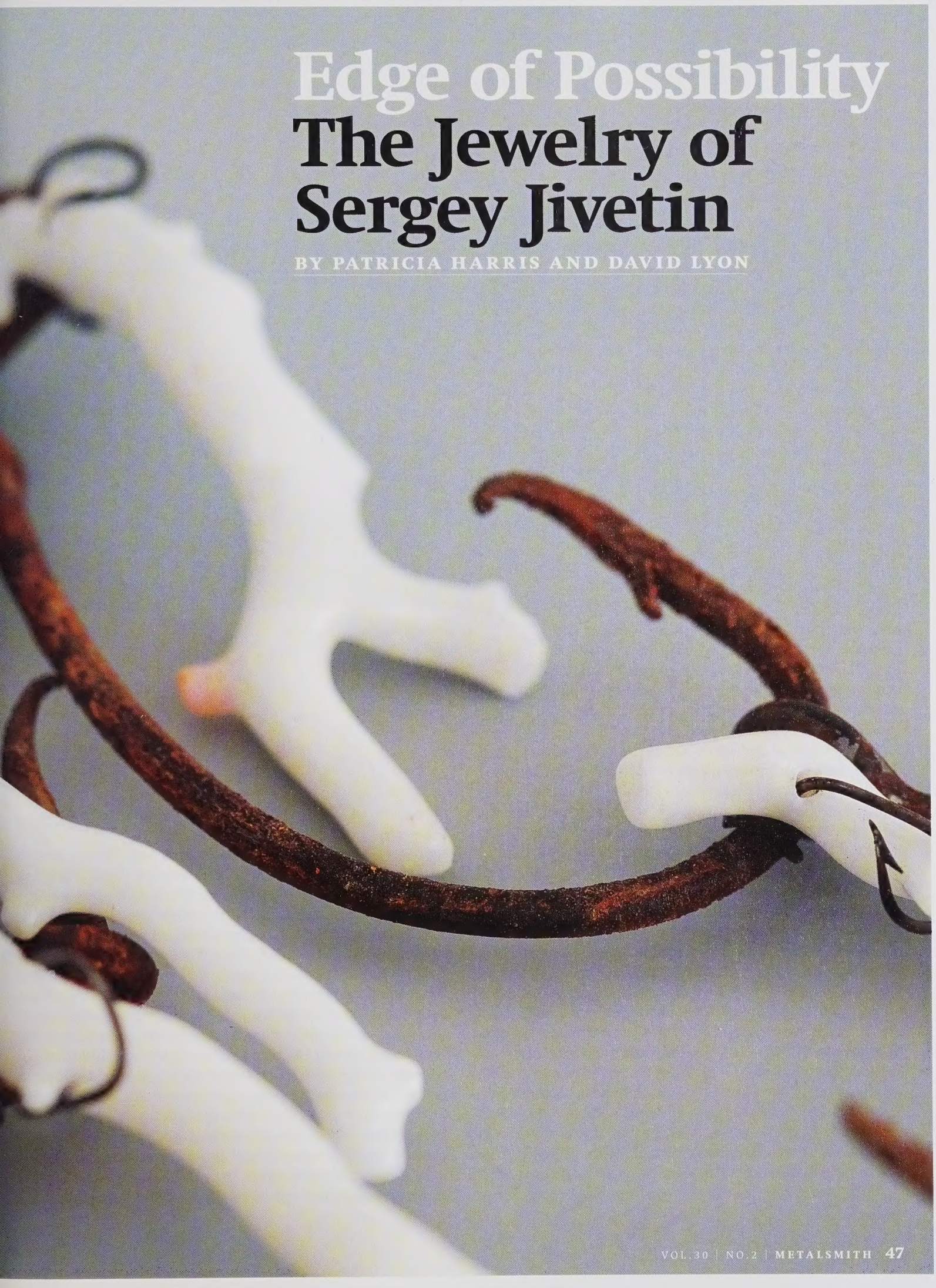
Furthermore
www.marzee.nl
www.charonkransenarts.com
www.galleryfunaki.com.au
www.apparat.be/?s=sarneel

Mourning Piece (necklace), 2008
antique textile, silver, thread, zinc
15 3/8 x 8 1/4 x 7/8"
PHOTO: ERIC KNOOTE

Bait Accumulus (necklace), 2009 (detail)
fishing hooks, white coral
22 x 10 x ½"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON

Edge of Possibility
The Jewelry of Sergey Jivetin

BY PATRICIA HARRIS AND DAVID LYON



"WORKING IN MINIATURE is my first love," admits Sergey Jivetin. He fondly recalls carving his own tiny pop culture action figures as a child in Uzbekistan, and how a course in filigree at age 13 taught him how to draw in three dimensions. By the time Jivetin began to study art at Parsons School of Design (where he received his BFA in 1999), he had already logged many hours as a teenage bench jeweler in Greenwich Village. He was well acquainted with working under magnification.

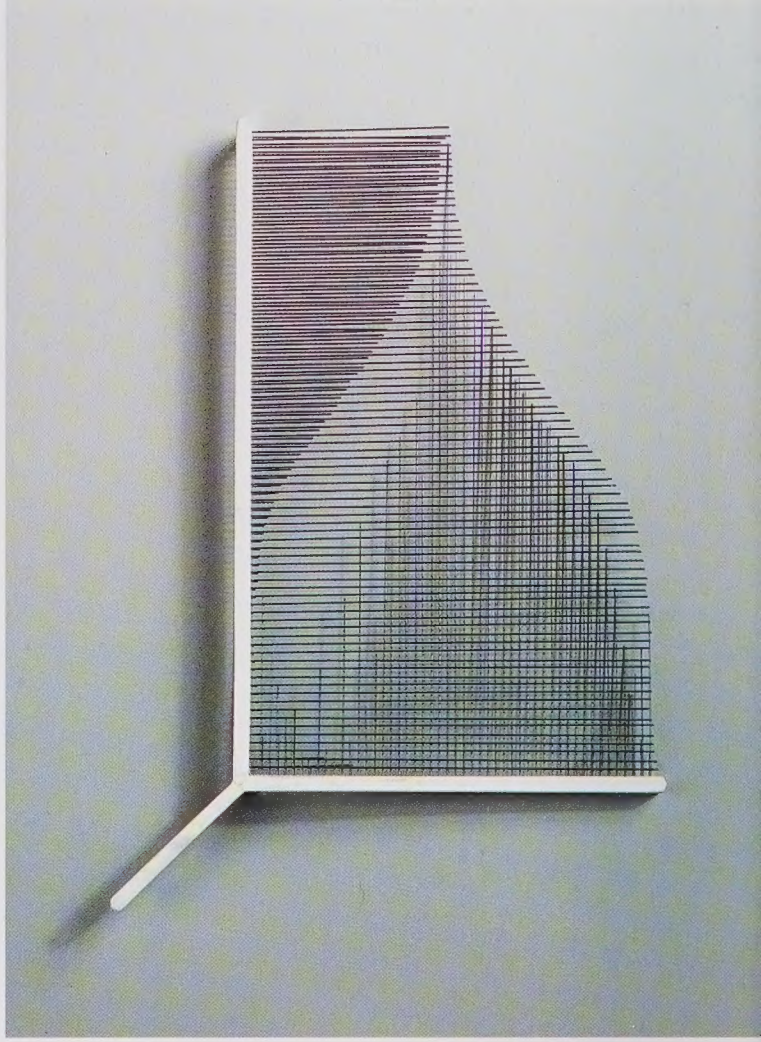
So uncanny is Jivetin's ability to work with the most miniscule of details that it's almost as if he builds his pieces from the molecular level up. He outfitted a show at Ornamentum Gallery in Hudson, New York, with magnifying glasses so viewers could grasp details invisible to the unaided eye. "There has to be some reward for real participation with a piece," he says. "It's worth doing the detail work for the one person who will notice it."

Yet his most recent work employs materials on a larger scale, with formal intricacy giving way to technical innovation. Over the last five years, Jivetin's work has evolved into an ambitiously imagined commentary on cultural preconceptions as they relate to shape and form. Even as his critique becomes more complex, the work itself becomes increasingly direct in its aesthetic appeal. Although most of his pieces are extremely labor intensive, he produces a substantial volume of work in each series and begins another with startling frequency. Following him is a little like watching evolution in real time.

Not long after earning his MFA from SUNY New Paltz in 2001, Jivetin began to command attention with the series that he ultimately called "Time Structures," in which he used tiny watch hands to create pieces in two subseries, "Complexities" and "Simplicities." The "simpler" forms highlighted the watch hands themselves, as in his *Coordinate Sweep Earrings*, where the delicate watch hands are set in rows like lashes yet are clearly identifiable to even a casual observer. In the "complex" forms, such as the *Battle Formation Brooch*, Jivetin built layer upon layer of watch hands into three-dimensional objects every bit as intricate as a mechanical watch.

The watch hands were Jivetin's first foray into using found materials, a byproduct of a job assembling watches. He became fascinated with the idea of building jewelry out of the parts as a commentary on cultural associations with time. Using manufactured parts had two advantages: They were uniform and recognizable, and he could devote himself to experimenting with their connotations instead of their fabrication. Jivetin initially purchased watch hands through eBay, buying 3,000 to 5,000 at a time, but since he was using that many in each piece of jewelry, he soon turned to Swiss and then Hong Kong manufacturers to order by custom sizes and colors.

So uncanny is Jivetin's ability to work with the most miniscule of details that it's almost as if he builds his pieces from the molecular level up.

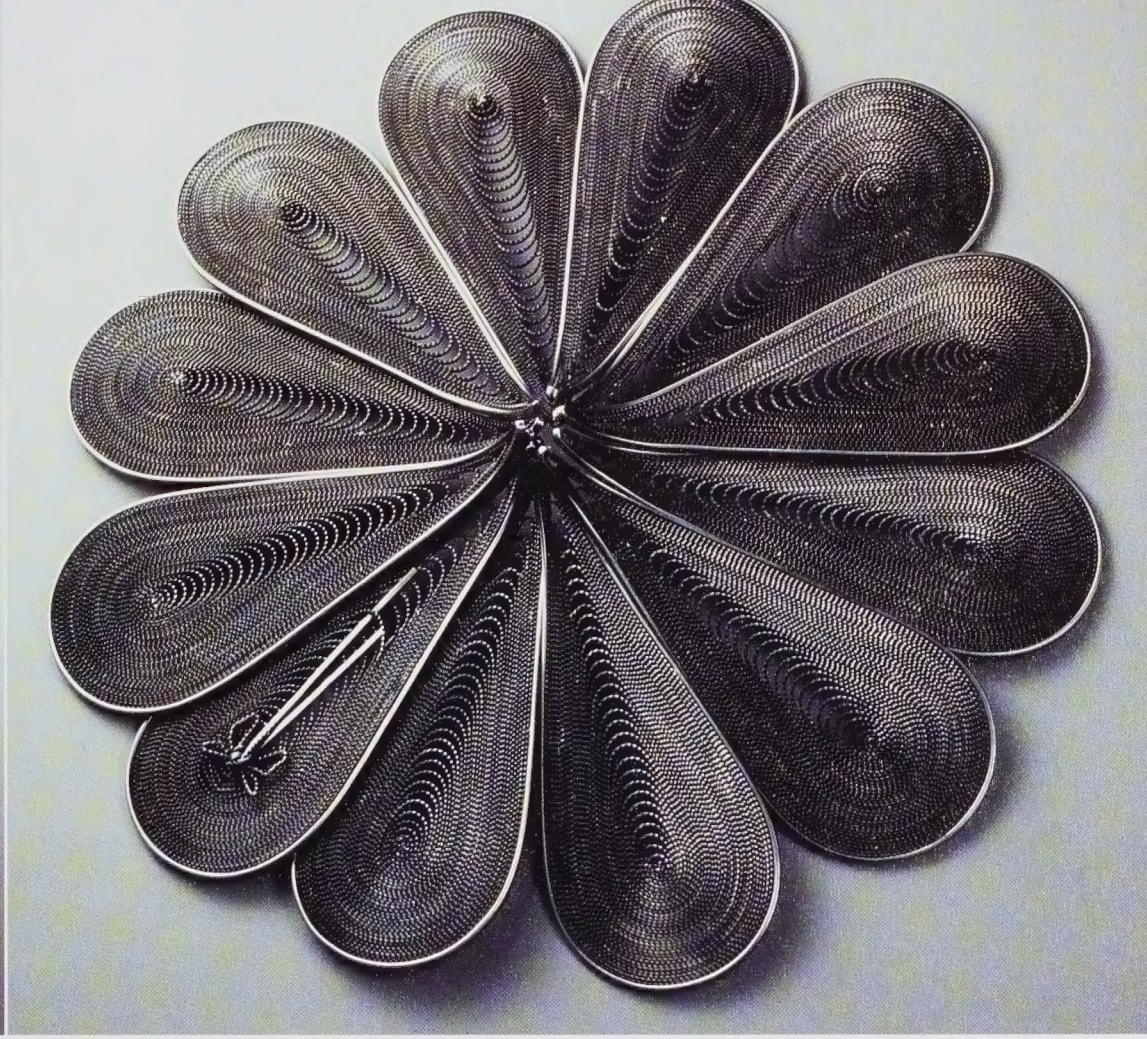


Cupola Graph (brooch), 2006
Nitinol, syringe needles, sterling silver
3 x 2 x ⅛"

Although Jivetin has long since moved beyond "Time Structures," he has one final piece in mind: A Swiss watch company approached him about a public sculpture, and Jivetin proposed a fence of phosphorescent watch hands to surround the 900-meter (2,953-foot) perimeter of its factory. "In Switzerland, it would be the perfect ideological statement," he says; "the perception of a fence that is only three-quarters of an inch high!" The project is on hold for the moment, a victim of the down economy, but Jivetin remains committed to the idea. "I love to use miniature scale in a large setting," he says. "Via the small scale, I want to give the viewer the experience the jeweler has."

Jivetin works sparingly with precious metals because he feels they constrict how his work will be perceived. "The conceptual, ideological weight contradicts what I am trying to do," he explains. "Instead, I'm trying to use materials that are on the edge of possibility to be used as jewelry."

Whorls and Eddies (worn)



Whorls and Eddies (bracelet), 2007
jeweler's saw-blades, stainless steel
6 x 6 x 1"

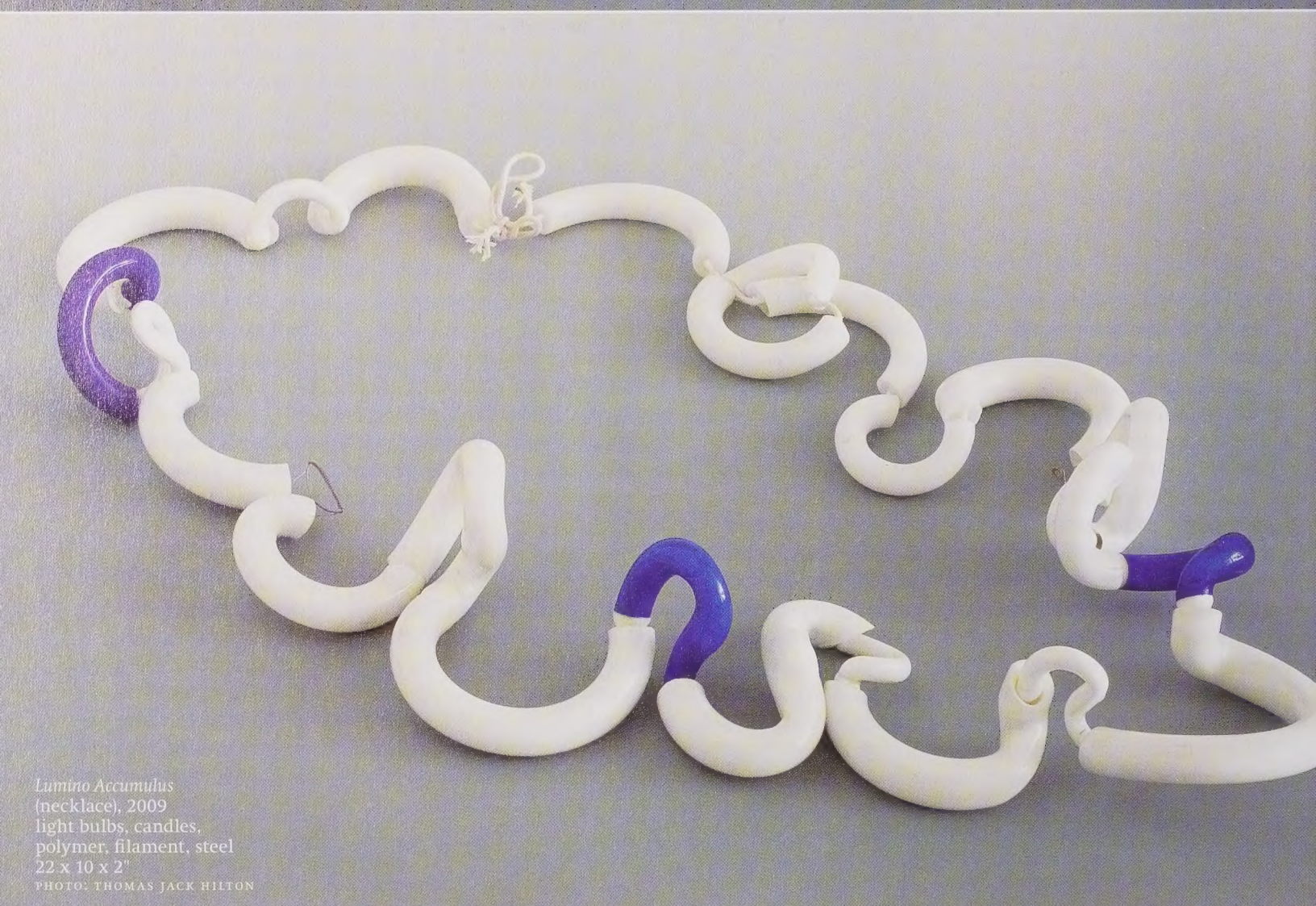
While his "Time Structures" series was driven by his play with artifacts—watch hands—his explorations of the possibilities of Nitonol wire opened multiple avenues of expression. Nitinol is a nickel-titanium alloy discovered by government researchers in 1962 and named for its constituent metals (nickel-titanium) and its place of discovery (the Naval Ordinance Laboratory). Widely used in medical and dental applications for its ability to change shape when warmed by body heat, it also has some interesting properties for art jewelry. Nitinol wire is much stronger than steel and far more flexible, allowing Jivetin to use strands little larger than a human hair as a support mechanism, a connector, or as a fiber to be fashioned into complex forms.

For the "Lineare" series (2006), Jivetin capitalized on the minute dimensions of Nitinol wire to employ it almost as a drafting tool. He built a series of virtually two-dimensional forms by looking through a microscope to drill precise holes in steel tubes cut from syringe needles, and milled his own jigs to make the precision holes. "I love finding efficient ways to do something that is time-consuming," he says.

Jivetin then strung the tubes together with Nitinol wire into cascades that look almost like pencil sketches—an onion dome in *Cupola Nitinol*, a graph in *Cupola Graph*. He succeeds in transforming profoundly durable materials—the wire and the surgical steel tubes—into ethereal works of art. He also creates an aesthetic tension by building intimate jewelry out of high-tech "sterile" materials.

Jivetin further exploited the paradox of using an alien material in an intimate setting in a series of rings (and some brooches). Depending on how it is manufactured, Nitinol wire is available in colored oxide finishes that range from pale amber to deep blue to soot black. In "Tethered Forms," Jivetin used different colors of the wire for mesh and web constructions that range from ersatz jewels set almost like a solitaire faceted stone on a conventional

Bound Accumulus
(necklace), 2009
pre-ban ivory, wrought
iron hooks and nails
22 x 11 x ¼"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON



Lumino Accumulus
(necklace), 2009
light bulbs, candles,
polymer, filament, steel
22 x 10 x 2"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON

Bait Accumulus
(necklace), 2009
fishing hooks, white coral
22 x 10 x ½"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON

Sliced Accumulus
(necklace), 2009
eggs, carbon fiber
22 x 10 x 1"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON

Knot Brooch, 2007
jewelers saw blades, steel
2 ½ x 1 x 1"

Torus Bracelet, 2007
Nitinol, syringe
needles, silver
6 x 6 x 1"

The juxtaposition of sharp, even dangerous metal against vulnerable skin or fabric makes such pieces conceptually startling.

precious-metal ring to springy tubes of metal fabric encircling the finger. The elasticity and lightness of the material gives a fluidity to the forms and feels very sensuous—almost alive—on the finger. The apotheosis of this line of experimentation is perhaps the *Torus Bracelet* (2007), with its sinuous wire structures, formal bands of syringe needles, and silver accents.

Jivetin seems to relish materials that initially appear inimical to flesh, such as syringe needles. The juxtaposition of sharp, even dangerous metal against vulnerable skin or fabric makes such pieces conceptually startling. Carrying the sense of menace a step further in 2007 and 2008, Jivetin designed an entire series around jeweler's saw blades. In one example, he set tiny porcelain teeth over the saw teeth. In *Jaws Pin*, he bent a length of blade into a brooch-like form that attaches to the wearer's garment by "biting" the fabric.

The saw blades, of course, are simply long strips of metal with both rough and smooth sides, and Jivetin exploited the band-like nature of the blades to good effect in the *Whorls and Eddies Bracelet* (2007), which encapsulates tightly wrapped ellipses of the blades in stainless steel structures that create intricate leaf patterns. The piece lies flat—or springs open for wearing on the wrist in an elegant form that visually captures the pent-up dynamic tension of the blades.

As lyrical as *Whorls and Eddies* might be, other pieces in the saw blade series exploit the implied threat of sharp and twisted metal. *Knot Brooch* (2007), for example, is a simple cluster of blades tied into a half hitch: dangerous shards bound ... for now. *Empire Necklace* (2008) is less restrained. By stringing together twisted clusters of partially rusted blades, it is as if Jivetin were daring the viewer to imagine wearing jewelry as instruments of punishment rather than adornment. The necklace underscores the fact that the same tool used to make beautiful objects can also be the agent of terrible destruction.

Being seduced by a material is an occupational hazard for a metalsmith, especially one as technologically adept as Jivetin. "I got a little too comfortable with taking one material and finding the expression for it," he admits. By contrast, his work over the last two years has begun with a concept, followed by finding the right materials to express it.

In a series of experiments, Jivetin constructed necklaces of unexpected artifacts: compact fluorescent light bulbs (*Lumino Accumulus*, 2009), for example, or teacup handles globbed together with blobs of white silicone tile sealer (*China Accumulus*, 2009). What the materials shared in common were curves that allowed him both to link elements together and to compose in a free-form fashion.

The most startling of this group of necklaces, which he identifies as part of the ongoing "Accumulus" series, is

Top: *Empire Necklace*, 2008
jeweler's saw blades
25 x 14 x ½"

Jaws Pin, 2007
jeweler's saw blade
1 x ¾ x ½"

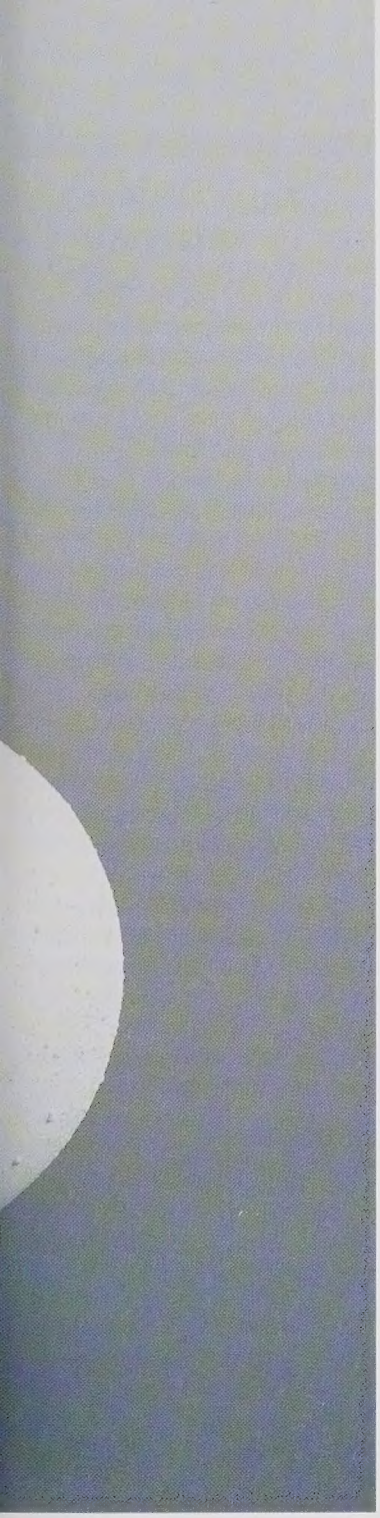
Poultry Accumulus (necklace), 2009
eggs, carbon fiber, gold, steel
22 x 10 x 2"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON

Accumulus II
(brooch), 2009
chicken eggs,
carbon fiber, steel
6 x 4 x 4"
PHOTO: THOMAS JACK HILTON

Bait Accumulus (2009), created from white coral and rusty fish hooks—a chilling linkage of commercial fishing with the death of coral beds. (Natural coral bleaches white as it dies, although hook-and-line fishing has never been linked to coral destruction in the way that draggers have.) The intricacy of the connections that Jivetin achieves by using different sizes of hooks and by sometimes threading their shanks through the eyes of other hooks is a marvel of design. The points of the hooks have been turned over and blunted to make the necklace safe to wear.

In another striking pairing, *Bound Accumulus* (2009), Jivetin paired iron brackets with curved strips of antique, pre-ban ivory to elicit the connection of the slave trade and the ivory trade. Jivetin was looking for a material to set the ivory in a broader cultural context. When he found his first rusted iron bracket, he was struck by its resemblance to antique shackles, so he oxidized others to complete the illusion. Beyond its cultural

"The egg pieces are almost bulletproof," Jivetin says. "They are light, but not too light. I wanted them to have a physicality."



comment, *Bound Accumulus* offers a graceful repetition of elongated curves and a jarring contrast between rusted iron and raw ivory joined by nails.

To accompany a solo 2009 exhibition at Ornamentum, Jivetin produced a text illuminating the genesis of the "Accumulus" series. The name is an play of words on puffy cumulus clouds, which he notes have been burdened by associations that range from dreams and wishes to threats and fears. His intention in the series is to elucidate the pathetic fallacy (i.e., the penchant for anthropomorphizing inanimate objects), in part by examining the interplay between tactile experience and emotional association in both natural and synthetic materials.

Perhaps the most technically challenging—and unexpected—materials in the "Accumulus" series are the reinforced shells of chicken eggs. Jivetin wanted to reinforce the shell with a light and strong substance that would be radically different from the shell itself. He began with Kevlar (the cloth used in body armor) and ultimately settled on carbon fiber in epoxy resin. "It is a nightmare to work with," he says. "It took a lot of experimentation."

To line the eggs, Jivetin had to slice them open with a diamond disc saw and remove the contents (including the membrane), then apply the fiber with an epoxy resin. To ensure that it cured without puddling, he slowly turned the treated eggs on the rotisserie of a countertop oven.

The result? "The egg pieces are almost bulletproof," Jivetin says. "They are light, but not too light. I wanted them to have a physicality."

Ethereal as the eggshell pieces are, the reinforcing materials give them a reasonable heft. The first pieces that Jivetin made were brooches (*Accumulus Brooch*, 2009) but seeking more interaction with the body, he soon branched out into necklaces. Jivetin struggles between creating wearable jewelry and realizing his concepts. The "Accumulus" necklaces, however, serve both aims.

Poultry Accumulus (2009) is a compositional exploration of ovoid forms. Rather than a graduated pearl-like strand of eggs, the necklace clumps eggs together and uses buds of small eggs placed on larger ones; the result is a piece of jewelry that looks more grown than fabricated. By contrast, *Shredded Accumulus* (2009) highlights Jivetin's technical innovation by looping together thin slices of the reinforced shell. The intense black interior visually dominates the pale eggshell, highlighting the synthetic aspect of the composite.

Jivetin took the yin-yang of eggshell bound to carbon fiber to its obvious compositional conclusion with his *Lingam* brooch (2009). In response to an invitation by Dutch jeweler Ruudt Peters to contribute work for the "Lingam" exhibition and symposium held in Sweden last fall, Jivetin created this representation of phallus and testicles—as graphic as any men's room wall graffiti—by joining the purely feminine form of eggs.

It appears that Jivetin has taken "Accumulus" about as far as he intended, and while the eggshell-carbon fiber composite material lends itself to further exploitation, it is almost a sure bet that he will soon be experimenting with another material, another concept. As Jivetin says, "I like to challenge the idea of where the edges are."

Patricia Harris and David Lyon are writers based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Furthermore
www.jivetin.com
www.ornamentumgallery.com
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hhz2rVzDdUo

Reviews

Fred Ball Enamels

San Francisco Museum of Craft + Design
July 24–October 4, 2009

by Jennifer Cross Gans

With every generation comes an artist who elevates his or her medium to a higher level. In the case of enameling, a strong contender would be Fred Ball (1945–85), the California artist who inspired many well-known enamelists, but whose own work is less familiar to the general public.

Co-curated by Bernard N. Jazzar and Harold B. Nelson, this exhibition is the first sponsored by the Enamel Arts Foundation, formed in 2007 "to promote awareness, understanding, and appreciation of enameling as a vibrant form of modern art." The 36 pieces on display attempt to trace Ball's development from his beginning as a precocious teenage enamelist.

The son of illustrator and enamelist Kathryn Uhl Ball and ceramist, author, and educator F. Carlton Ball, Ball was introduced to the pleasures and challenges of art and fire as a child. He began to give public demonstrations of his skill from age 11, and won his first prize for his work at age 14.

When one is that talented that young, one can either become rich and complacent, burn out—or develop a relentless desire to experiment. Fortunately for the enameling world, this latter path is the one Ball continued upon.

Traditional enamels historically have tended to focus on the small, the decorative, and the precious. Gradually Ball blew this approach wide open, learning, then encouraging others to use a freer, more intuitive style. Instead of using liquid enamels in the conventional manner, he sprayed them on cobwebs and other organic materials, then fired them on metal. He spilled them from a height to create splashed designs, sometimes adding on wax, sand, and salt. He combined them with different foils to create layers of elusive color. He experimented with sgraffito, designing bowls with odd or abstract designs. He also enameled unusual materials, including brass and titanium.

Ball employed firescale—traditionally the bane of enamelists—in new and creative ways. *Letter to Lyonel Feininger*, is one in a delightful series of pieces he made from gorgeously colored thin copper that he frequently sent to friends as gifts. On small sculptures like a copper pillow or a lunchbag, the color is almost burned away, creating a subtly distressed look.

The show is an enamelist's delight, especially for visitors with even a basic knowledge of the medium, who can appreciate how hard it is to do successfully. The general public will miss many of the finer technical points, but will relish the most spectacular collages that blaze with color, particularly autumnal reds, golds, and bronzes. Ball's *Open Letter to My Friends as Clouds* is composed of thin, serenely arranged sheets of copper, while *Kites in the Blue Wind* uses material that has been rolled, scored, and etched, all creating the illusion of turbulence.

As Ball's career advanced, he undertook bigger commissions, including wall panels for private and corporate clients, combining his different techniques to make painterly abstracts. Given the size limitations of non-industrial enameling kilns, he designed pieces like *The Palace at 2 AM* from copper panels mounted on cardboard. Ball's largest work, *The Way Home*, from 1977–80 (photographed for this show), adorns the municipal parking garage at Sacramento's 3rd and L streets, and comprises four floors of panels studded with 12-inch-square tiles in the colors of earth, grass, and sky.

Ball's life was tragically cut short at age 40 as a result of a savage street attack. One cannot help wondering where his creative genius would have led him, or what it must have been like to watch him in action. Fortunately for the art world, he left behind a 1972 book on *Experimental Techniques in Enameling*. His work has inspired a generation of enamelists, and this show will introduce younger artists to this pioneer as well.

Jennifer Cross Gans is a writer and studio jeweler in San Francisco.

Furthermore
www.enamelarts.org
www.sfmcd.org

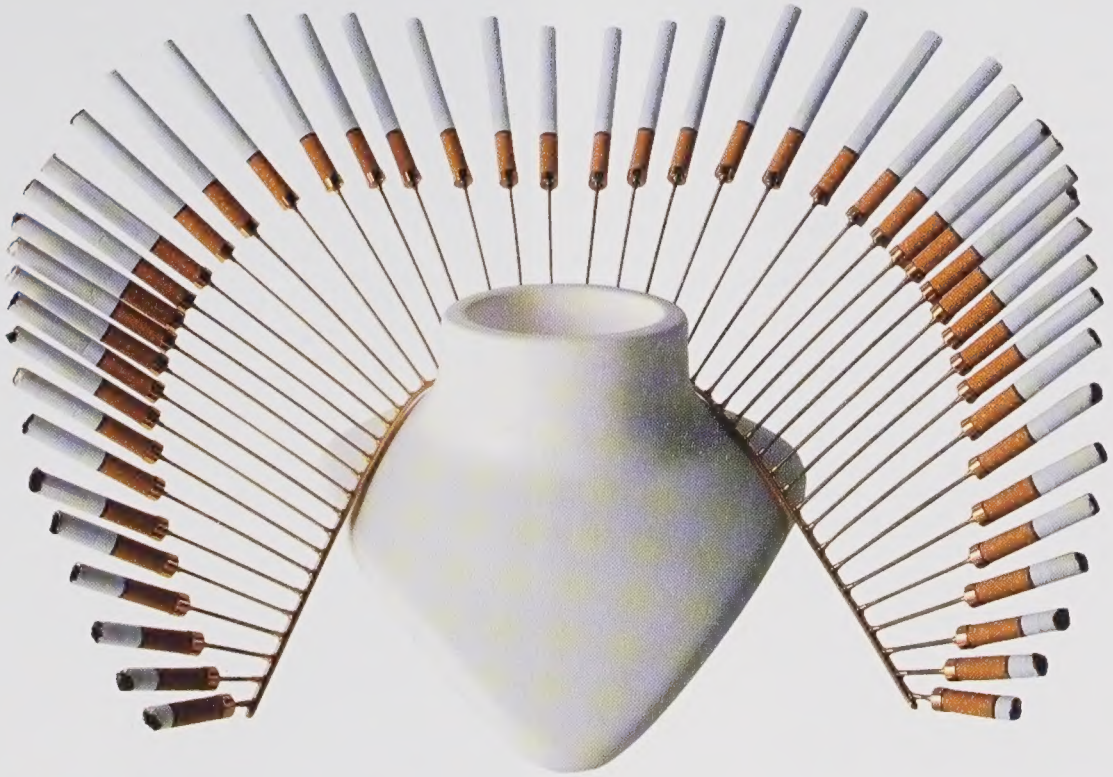
Kites In The Blue Wind, 1974-5
enamel on copper
32 x 27"
PHOTO: JESSE BRAVO

Open Letter to My Friends as Clouds, 1977
enamel on brass and copper foil
36 x 27"
PHOTO: JESSE BRAVO

Wearable: Alex Chaney and Genne Laakso

Punch Gallery, Seattle
July 2–August 1, 2009

by Matthew Kangas



ALEX CHANEY
Repel: Fumiphobia, 2008
Camel cigarettes, gold-plated copper, brass-coated steel wire
15 x 15 x 4 ½"
PHOTO: KENT COLONY

This exhibition was a startling gallery debut for two recent MFA graduates of Keith Lewis's program at Central Washington University in Ellensburg. Alexandra Chaney and Genne Laakso, both 28, use jewelry as tools of control and confinement, but leavened with considerable humor as well as impressive craftsmanship. Chaney and Laakso draw on club culture and a playful sense of sado-masochistic subcultures for inspiration, adding their own individual sensibilities and kink. "Performative" might be a better descriptor than "wearable" for the bracelets, necklaces, and body ornaments in this exhibit, since one readily imagines dark and arcane rituals acted out while they are worn.

Of the two, Laakso is the more theatrical. Her big centerpiece, *Promenading the Elation* (2009), suggests the provocative display of a human-as-possession wearing a tight, neck-mounted rubberized shoulder piece with suspended lead fishing weights. Below the demure black rubber collar stainless steel fishhooks are inserted into the wearer's skin—an aesthetic of pain more intense than most examples of North American jewelry art. The lead weights increase pull on the hooks, further intensifying the wearer's masochistic thrill—and so on. At the same time, suspended as they are, the fishing weights could be used for lashing.

In a witty installation of suspended mannequin legs, Laakso's *Anima (Garter VI)*, (2009) and *Demark* (2008) are attached to separate legs, as are *Epicene* (2007), *Transpositional* (2008), *and Inviolable* (2008). Removed from their theatrical displays, however, these works are all beautiful variations on a dog collar. *Demark* combines nickel elements with sterling silver and stainless steel studs. The inner area is comprised of four scythe-like sections that could cut into or tighten around the leg—or neck. To open and close, the necklace separates in half with simple boltlike clasps on the sides. One recalls colonial New England community punishment stocks. *Anima (Garter VI)* employs jagged circular sawblades for its inner circle and overlapping steel triangles for its perimeter. This, too, is adjustable for a looser or tighter "fit."

While her objects are less painful-looking than Laakso's, Alex Chaney makes sculptures that are more elegant, despite their own dangers to the wearer. In fact, the show's title "wearable" could be read as a taunt or a dare. *Repel: Fumiphobia* (2008) sets 51 Camel filter cigarettes of varying stages of having been smoked into gold-plated, graduated holders that assemble into a necklace. Moving from near the front to the back of the array, each cigarette is a different size—from butt to whole, one might say. Worn as a stiff Elizabethan ruff collar, *Fumiphobia* has a grand sense of occasion. It could be worn to an urban club or a formal costume party in the Deep South somewhere near tobacco fields.

GENNE LAAKSO
Demark, 2008
animal identification tattoo letters, nickel, sterling silver, foam, stainless steel
¾ x 8 x 6"
PHOTO: KENT COLONY

Repel: Aprilophobia (2007) seems all pink and frilly until one learns that its truncated plastic appurtenances are actually "bovine syringe needles and plunger tips." Continuing the theme of the barnyard, *Repel: Castrate* (2008) is a green choker necklace that uses sheep and cow castrating rings, but adds a single pearl. Spilling over with gendered symbols, Chaney's work is not as performative as Laakso's, but still carries threatening overtones. *Repel: Aichmopohobia* (2008) "protects" its wearer by using X-acto knife blades on nylon-coated fishing lines of irregular length set into a copper circle. Nail-studded African tribal sculptures, and their promise of warding off evil spirits, come to mind.

Equally anti-pastoral, other works use rabbit feces and

mealworms, for example, combining them with sterling silver (*Pasture Pearls*, 2008); or mousetraps and cubic zirconia (*Repel: Snap*, 2009); or garlic cloves and sterling silver (*Repel: Alliumphobia*, 2007). Chaney has created her own aesthetic of bucolic terror, satirizing organic farming and gardening. Yet her jewelry commands attention with its allusions to the ranch, the corral, and the barn, and the local farmers' hardware store nearby.

With such a strong debut, it will be salutary and no doubt frightening to see where Chaney and Laakso go from here. The results are likely to be equally beautiful and uncomfortable. "Wearable," indeed.

Matthew Kangas is a Seattle-based writer whose recent essay collection, Craft and Concept: The Rematerialization of the Art Object, *is available from Midmarch Arts Press.*

Furthermore
www.punchgallery.org

Loud Bones: The Jewelry of Nancy Worden

Tacoma Art Museum, Washington
June 27–September 20, 2009

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by Judy Wagonfeld

Artist Nancy Worden crafts jewelry the way some people write op-ed essays, slyly embedding her opinion in works that hook us with wit, intellect, and technical virtuosity.

Worden's first retrospective preens like a plucky courtesan. Accented by chartreuse and white walls, black metal busts, and four-by-five color photos of models wearing Worden's necklaces, the exhibit sprawls through the Tacoma Art Museum's largest gallery. Organized by curator Rock Huska as the museum's

NANCY WORDEN
Diamonds and Lust, 1998
18k gold, silver, 22k gold settings, gold-plated copper and silver, pearls, money, candy wrappers, laminated photograph
23 x 5 x 1"
COLLECTION STEDELIJK MUSEUM'S HERTOGENBOSCH, THE NETHERLANDS
PHOTO: DOUG YAPLE

NANCY WORDEN
Transfer of Power, 2005
silver, copper, glass, leather, fake hair, plastic nails
front: 13 ½ x 15 x ¾"
PHOTO: REX RYSTEDT

inaugural exhibit devoted to jewelry, it is accompanied by a richly detailed catalogue.

Worden's art is clearly American, autobiographical and cathartic. It captivates viewers who nod knowingly and laugh out loud at Worden's plucky motifs. Nothing esoteric here; just universal concerns such as working versus mothering struggles, parental loss, domestic relationships, politics, conflict, consumerism, and equality. After all, who else would make an eye-catching pin called *Bathroom Bowl Blues* (1992)? With its miniature scrub brush and sponge nestled amid silver and jewels, it broadcasts gender-based conflicts about the division of household chores. Another social insight pin, *Nights in Shining Armor* (1994), incorporates a pink condom, a Trojan warrior, and a silver replica of a Life Saver candy as a female symbol of receptivity, sweetness, and survival. The message suggests women seek self-sufficiency rather than a fairy tale knight in shining armor.

Steeped in wry, hard-hitting commentary, Worden's chunky necklaces, bracelets, pins, and tiaras call upon psychology, mythology, sociology, and her personal life to assail the cultural mores of our place and time. The works pay homage to the Pacific Northwest's rich jewelry traditions, born of found object masters including Ramona Solberg, Ron Ho, and Ken Cory, Worden's mentor at Central Washington University.

Following their practices, Worden strives for precision craftsmanship in assembling her sundry objects with her impeccably cast metal creations. *Transfer of Power* (2005) presents a sumptuous take on Native American bear claw necklaces. Placed at intervals along an intricately loomed seed bead cable, Worden's copper-edged silver forefingers and purple fingernails serve as claws, while hair extensions substitute as animal fur. Vividly hued, it intimates what Worden calls "backbiting" as a means of getting ahead. In *Frozen Dreams* (2004), a jangling collection of etched eyeglass lenses imply ice, a metaphor for the optimism of turning frozen ideas to reality.

Worden frequently inserts coins and bills to evoke the concept of materialism standing at the heart of American life. *Diamonds and Lust* (1998), its gold hands clasping coins, reflects the outlandish outlay of cash for sports stadiums and players. On the reverse of its dollar bills-stuffed baseball field pendant, Worden etched, "Play ball." Economists could take lessons from *Hologram Theater* (1998) and *Hologram Hell* (1998), slave-style bracelets of credit card segments that reference credit-based consumption as economic enslavement.

Worden's skill at infusing content arises from jewelry's historical significance in people's lives, rituals, and myths. *Beans in Your Ears* (1996) with dried beans under glass in silver ears, pokes fun at our unwillingness to listen. In her 2003 *Exosquellette #2* (French for exoskeleton), wood clothespins, metal disks, and glass eyes form a metaphoric spine and ribs. Covering both chest and back as if protective armor, the neckpiece becomes a backbone for "spiritual osteoporosis," a condition Worden believes afflicts baby boomer women (her age group) as their sexual and mothering roles fade. In *The Leash* (2003) pearls, mink balls, and coins represent how a successful man might decorate his wife; an implication that women remain in bad relationships for the benefits of wealth. Suggesting choice, Worden's *Leash* easily unhooks from its collar.

Rather than mere adornment or ostentatious display, Worden's jewelry is metaphoric armor, power suits that protect their wearers. "Loud Bones" reflects Worden's growing sophistication in merging astute social observations with technique in making the conceptual idea paramount. It divulges her journey to self-awareness and empowerment, a narrative that encourages other women to look at themselves. Like any thought-provoking essay, Worden's work speaks of our rights and obligations to society by shedding light on the "bones" of human relationships.

Judy Wagonfeld is a freelance writer who has reviewed art and written about travel, food, and people for diverse publications.

Furthermore
www.nancywordenjewelry.com

Delight in Design: Indian Silver for the Raj

The Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin, Madison
July 25–October 4, 2009

by Kim Cridler

Exhibited within the elegant and spacious Brittingham galleries at The Chazen Museum of Art, "Delight In Design" exposed a rich vein of cultural cross-pollination. Focusing on silver tableware created by Indian craftsmen for use during the period of British colonial rule from 1858 to 1947 known as the Raj, the exhibition reveals two traditions entwined through speculation and desire. Curated by Vidya Dehejia, Professor of Indian Art in Columbia University's Department of Art History and Archaeology, most of the work exhibited was from the collection of Paul F. Walter.

The Chazen galleries, painted a warm putty gray, presented large cases with crisply upholstered risers featuring 150 pieces of silver and gold. Counting every beaker, biscuit box, dessert spoon, salver, wine bottle holder, tea pot, compote, menu card holder, milk jug, pepper pot, sugar caster, claret jug, marrow spoon, and other object of Imperial custom, the exhibition featured some 264 objects. This substantial body of work was tethered to its time and place by text panels, maps, historic photographs, detailed descriptions of the process of chasing and repoussé, Indian miniature paintings, and a significant cache of working drawings and plans from the workshop of Oomersee Mawjee and Sons, of Kutch, India, one of the most prominent shops at the

P. ORR & SONS, MADRAS
Sugar Bowl, 1876
silver
height 4"

OOMERSEE MAWJEE JR., KUTCH
Tea Service Shaped as a Quail,
ca. 1920-1930
silver
height from 6 ½ – 4"

time. The depth of this historical and aesthetic material grounded the objects in their specific political, economic, and cultural conditions.

"Delight" offered an immersion into the way Indian craftsmen hybridized iconic European forms such as the punchbowl and the calling card case through the application of distinctly regional designs. The pivotal term *design* here connotes pattern and ornamentation; an older meaning, as explained by Dehejia during an opening-night lecture. Inescapable in this work is the essential pleasure taken in ornamentation. Delicate geometric borders, textile patterns, garden vignettes of lovers' trysts, stylized floral ornamentation, and hunting scenes seemed to migrate directly from the detailed paintings on the gallery walls to the malleable feet, bellies, shoulders, necks, and lids of the serving pieces.

Articulating a kind of aesthetic palette of ornamental delight, the exhibition defined and described styles from eight regions of colonized India, from the Madras region's depiction of Hindu deities subsequently known as "swami silver"; to the lavish all-over floral patterns of Kutch silver; to the brief experimentation with animal scenes from the Alwar area (intricately engraved in a very pure alloy that was found to be too delicate to wear); to the Kashmir style associated with patterns resembling paisley and local flora such as the Chinar tree. "Delight" maps the way in which vernacular interests and tastes were grafted to objects that supported and confirmed Imperial power. Some forms reached great international popularity, and were exhibited at the 1851 Great Exhibition and subsequent World's Fairs in the mid nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

It is hard to look at such an intimate picture of power and taste without longing for a moral to this age-old drama. Was it the story of colonizing forces consuming the ornamental souvenirs of an exotic culture? Or was it the story of native businessmen satisfying the mad dreams of a self-conscious clientele, employing indigenous craftsmen who illustrated and subsequently broadcast what they themselves held dear? But "Delight" resists asserting a scorecard; the work cannot be so simply reduced. In the end, it is the objects themselves that come to mind: the sinuous curve and elegantly extended throat of a wine jug, covered in a tattooed skin of chased flowers, so tight and consistent that the pattern reads like a cuneiform script or a rehearsed dance step. This is perhaps the role of objects, to present a reality more beautiful, more charged, and endlessly more complicated than language alone can illustrate.

Kim Cridler is assistant professor of metalsmithing and jewelry art at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Furthermore
www.learn.columbia.edu/delight

Stanley Lechtzin: Five Decades 1959–2009

Philadelphia Art Alliance
May 14–July 26, 2009

by Susan Myers

"Stanley Lechtzin: Five Decades 1959-2009" focuses on one man's commitment to the integration of industrial technologies in the jewelry and metalsmithing studio environment. Lechtzin's steadfastness commitment is evidenced in the compendium of artwork on view in four upstairs galleries at the Philadelphia Art Alliance. The ten-week retrospective exhibition was organized by Lechtzin's wife Daniella Kerner, and was held in conjunction with the 2009 Society of North American Goldsmiths Conference.

Most historians and practitioners would agree that Lechtzin is a pioneer in the field, as well as a tireless and dedicated educator. These accomplishments and attributes are well documented in the accompanying exhibition catalogue, which includes an essay by Helen Williams Drutt English, a longtime champion of Lechtzin's work. But one can now assess the results of these enduring pursuits—the overall quality of Lechtzin's artwork on display and its context within the contemporary art world.

The artist's early work is typical of the modernist period, with finely constructed and simply but elegantly designed jewelry pieces that in Lechtzin's case often included reticulated or textured surfaces. These wrinkled and rippled surfaces, as seen in *Pendant, #86B* (1967), continued to be a central feature in the artist's work, as he sought relief from the physically constraining weight of casting and fabrication and began his

exploration into the possibilities of electroforming.

Artistically, Lechtzin's strongest work is that which resulted from his involvements and experiments with electroforming in the mid-'60s, '70s, and '80s, mainly in the form of neckpieces and brooches, although some bracelets were also on view. These works embrace the use of a "new" technology while also displaying an imaginative and creative use of amorphous form and an unconventional but discerning use of gems and mineral crystals. Even today, this jewelry seems fresh and inspired, fully suited to its rather large scale and commanding of the rippled, contorted, and rich gold surfaces that serve as a hallmark for Lechtzin's jewelry from this era. While it is the electroforming process itself that has enabled these defining characteristics in the artist's work, it is the artist that has manipulated this industrial technology to an aesthetically satisfying conclusion.

However, sometimes the use of a new material or technology can make objects seem obsolete very quickly, as seems the case for many of the artist's pieces that emphasized plastics technology. All of the "Cameo" pieces used what was at one time groundbreaking photo-polymer image technology to embed a photographic halftone image of the female body in cast acrylic, but today this imagery seems flat and stagnant.

In 1978 Lechtzin started using the newest technological tool available to artists: the computer. His engagement of digital technologies to design and then produce jewelry and art objects, while initially considered controversial, led to a well-established medium. The exhibition labels and catalogue text, which quotes the artist's thoughts and comments on the validity of contemporary technologies, seems rather dated and condescending, especially given the universality of today's digitally driven world.

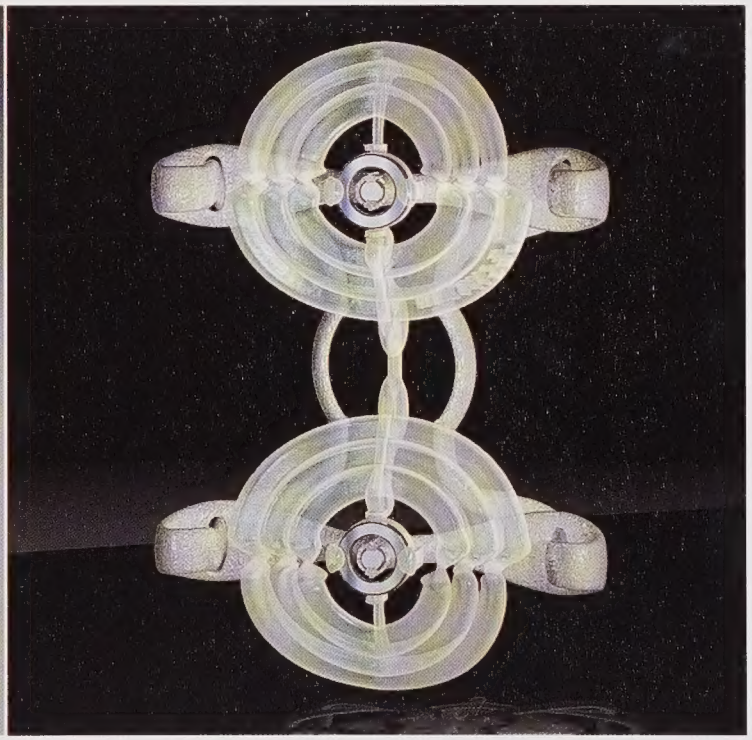
One is often disappointed by CAD/CAM artwork in this field, either because the current technology and/or the artist is not capable or successful in aesthetically transforming idea into art. Of particular concern are the industrial materials that define the "tangible" objects generated from computer-aided manufacturing and rapid prototyping, including epoxy, glass-filled nylon, and hardened gypsum. In contrast to Lechtzin's tremendously expressive electroformed artworks, these materials give his CAD/CAM work a cold and generic character, and the lack of any color variation on the jewelry (most surfaces are opaque white or near white) only adds to their austerity. A byproduct of 3D printing using stereolithography material is a predictable and uniformly textured surface. Most interesting was how this texture subtly echoed the reticulated surfaces on so many of the artist's earlier works. With the return of clean lines and geometric forms, Lechtzin's CAD/CAM artwork from the last ten years can only suggest a resurgence of his modernist tendencies from times past. It seems for Lechtzin, what was old has become new again.

Susan Myers is a visual artist and metalsmith currently working as a project manager for a nonprofit public art organization in Philadelphia.

Furthermore
www.philartalliance.org
www.temple.edu/crafts
www.nancywordenjewelry.com

Cameo Brooch, #56D, 1975
electroformed silver gilt, cast acrylic, photo-polymer embedment
6 ½ x 6 ½ x 3"

RarEarth 3 Dichotomy Brooch, #65F-2, 2005
CAD, Rapid Prototype, stereolithography epoxy, selective laser sintered glass-filled nylon, rare earth magnets
6 ½ x 4 ½ x 1 ¼"



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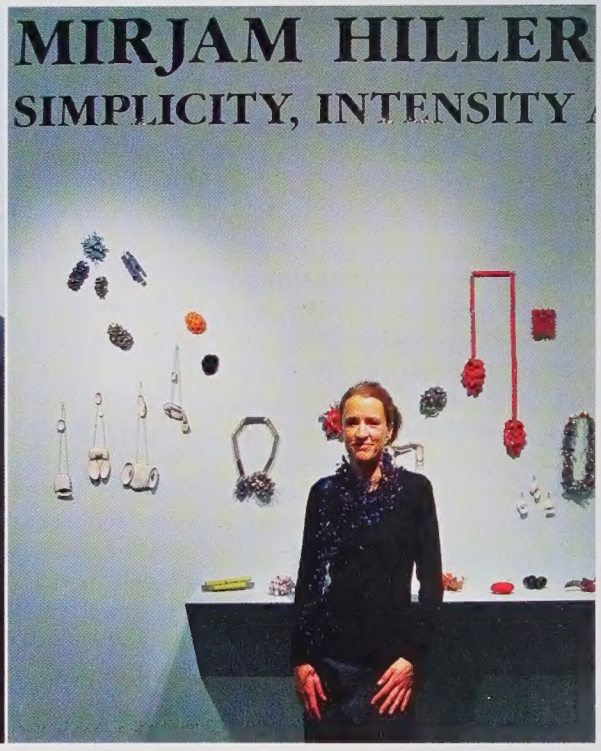
BY DANA SINGER

SNAG Emerging Artist lecturers, at SOFA Chicago, left to right: Lauren Kalman, Robert Longyear, and Arthur Hash



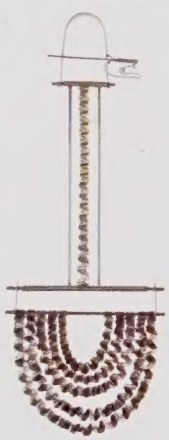
SNAG-sponsored lecturer Mirjam Hiller at SOFA Chicago with her work in the booth of Charon Kransen Arts

SNAG-Sponsored Lectures at SOFA Chicago

SNAG sponsored three lectures at SOFA Chicago last November, coordinated by Donald Friedlich. Our annual "Emerging Artists" talk featured Arthur Hash, Lauren Kalman, and Robert Longyear on the development of their work. In "Mirjam Hiller: Simplicity, Intensity and Jewelry," Hiller talked about her work and inspirations, and her goal to capture living forms and movement in various materials. And in "Stories from the Crystal Palace: New Jewelry from Barbara Seidenath," Seidenath detailed her 30-year exploration of the use of enamel in jewelry.

SNAG Co-Produces Traveling Exhibition of South African Contemporary Jewelry

SNAG has partnered with U.S. curator Lauren Kalman and South African curator Carine Terreblanche on their traveling exhibition, "Dichotomies in Objects: Contemporary South African Studio Jewelry from the Stellenbosch Area." This exhibition will feature close to 150 pieces of work by 18 South African artists. All the artists featured are affiliated with Stellenbosch University, the only university in South Africa teaching conceptual approaches to jewelry making. The exhibition and accompanying catalogue will be seen in the spring at The National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, in the summer at Velvet da Vinci, San Francisco, and in the fall at the Ohio Craft Museum in Columbus.



Brooch by Marie-Louise Naudé from the traveling exhibition, "Dichotomies in Objects: Contemporary South African Studio Jewelry"

Upcoming SNAG Conferences

SNAG's 2011 conference in Seattle will be hosted by the Seattle Metals Guild and co-chaired by Joan Hammond and Carmen Valdes. In 2012 the SNAG conference is in Phoenix, hosted by Arizona State University and co-chaired by Becky McDonah, Tedd McDonah, and Lynette Andreasen. The SNAG conference next goes to Toronto in 2013, hosted by George Brown College, Jewellery Studies, and the Harbourfront Centre, co-chaired by Paul McClure, Professor of Jewelry and Gemology at George Brown, and Melanie Egan, Head of Craft at the Harbourfront Centre.

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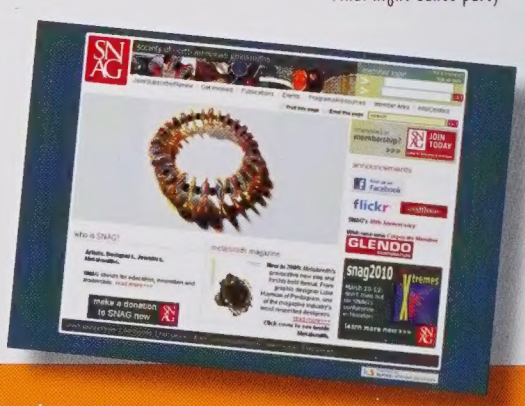
- Exhibitions

Visit www.snagmetalsmith.org, for a host of resources, such as mailing lists of museums and galleries that show jewelry and metals, experienced photographers, and artists who give workshops around the country.



SNAG has enriched my personal and professional life and pushed me to grow as an artist. SNAG has been the key to new friends and contacts from all over the world.

Donald Friedlich, studio jeweler, glass and gold

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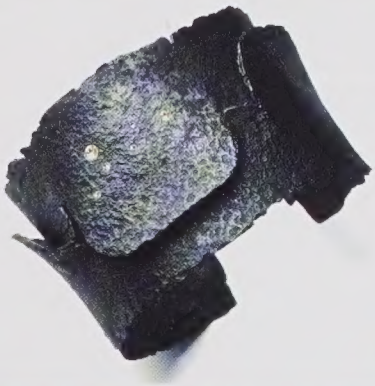

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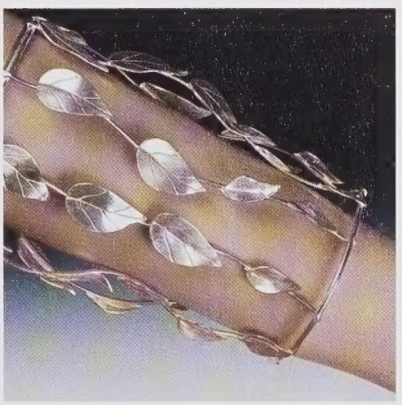

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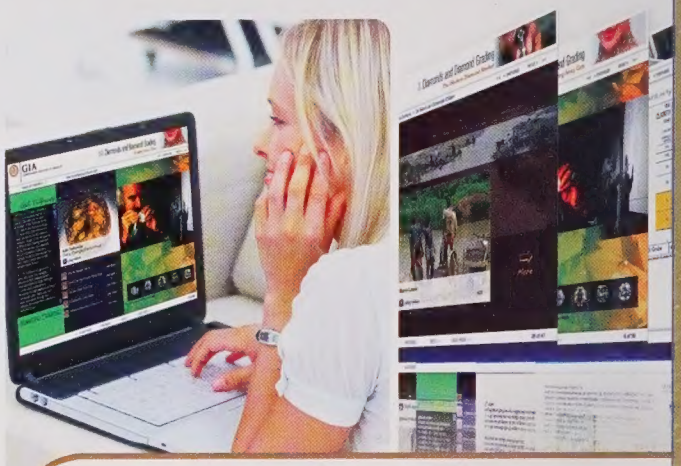

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Jamie Bennett
Posteriori 20
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Brooch, enamel, gold, copper; 3" x 2½"

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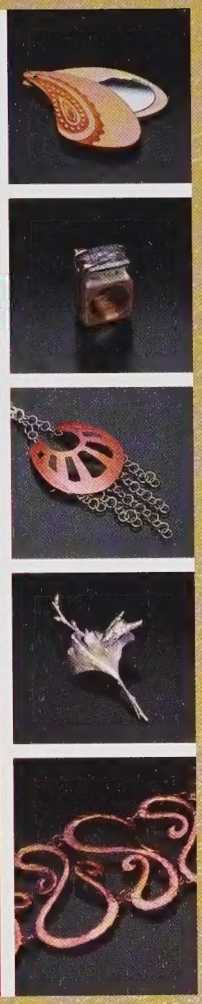

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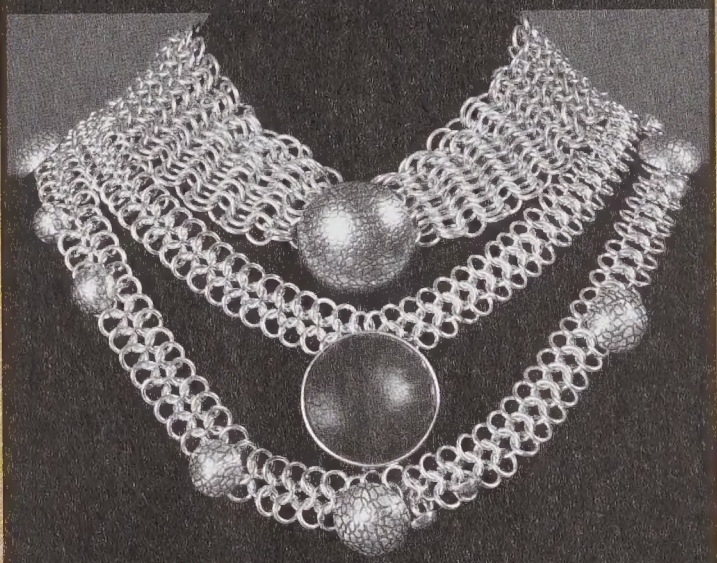

Jewelry by Heather Kenealy, Fine Art Student

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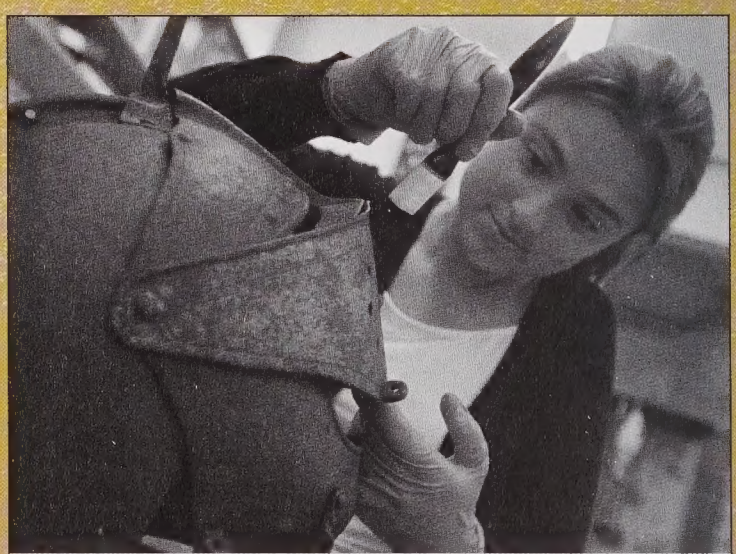

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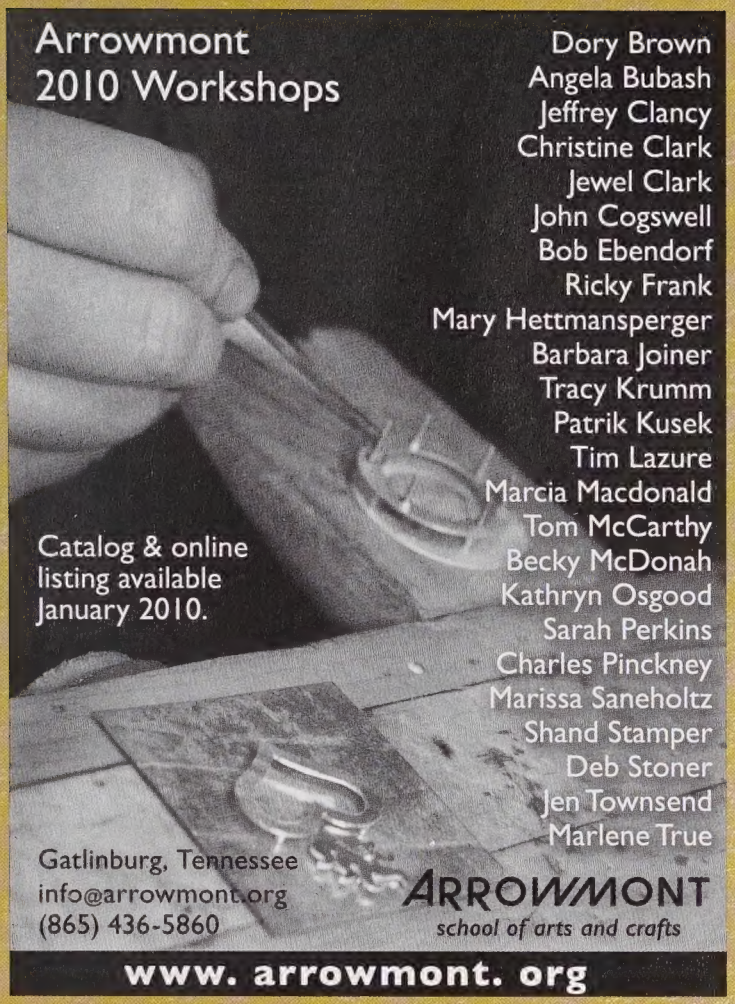

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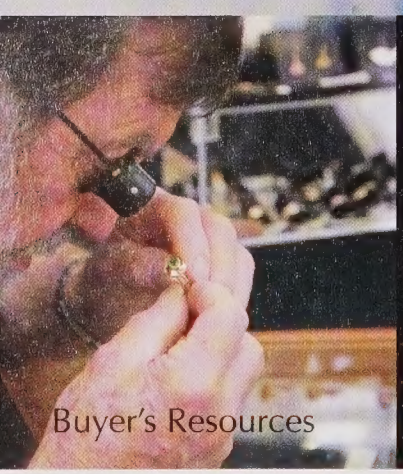

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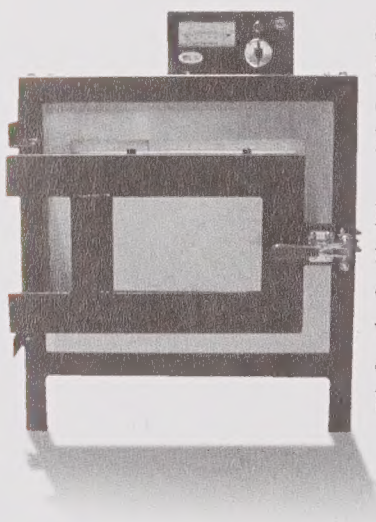

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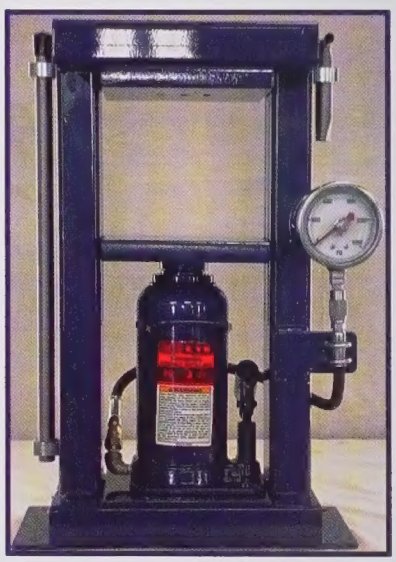

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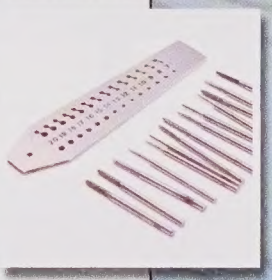

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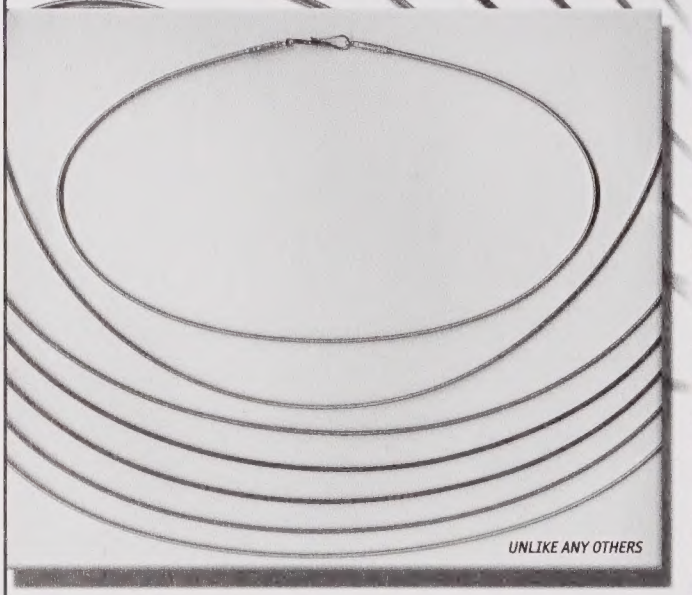

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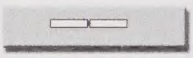
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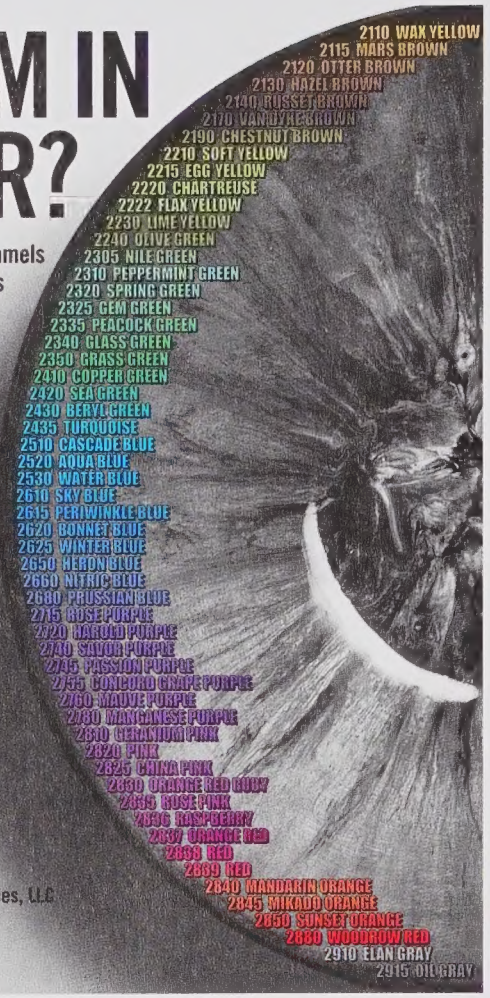

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Spiculum Jewelry
Above: "Let's Party" by Betty Helen Longhi; photo by artist. Pendant; Sterling silver, niobium and pearls

Right: "Rivers and Canyons II" by Cynthia Eid. Sterling, 18KYG, and Rhodolite Garnets, 7" x 7" x 1" Neckpiece

A spiculum is a single piece of sheet metal that is formed into a tapering tube.

Betty Helen Longhi and Cynthia Eid have teamed up with Bill Fretz and Allcraft to design and produce the Ultimate Spiculum Hammer. The Ultimate Spiculum Hammer has the elegant lines and exquisitely comfortable handle that are trademarks of Fretz hammers. The new proportions and weight of the Ultimate Spiculum Hammer afford exquisite control and exceptional accuracy for both the beginner and experienced metalsmith.

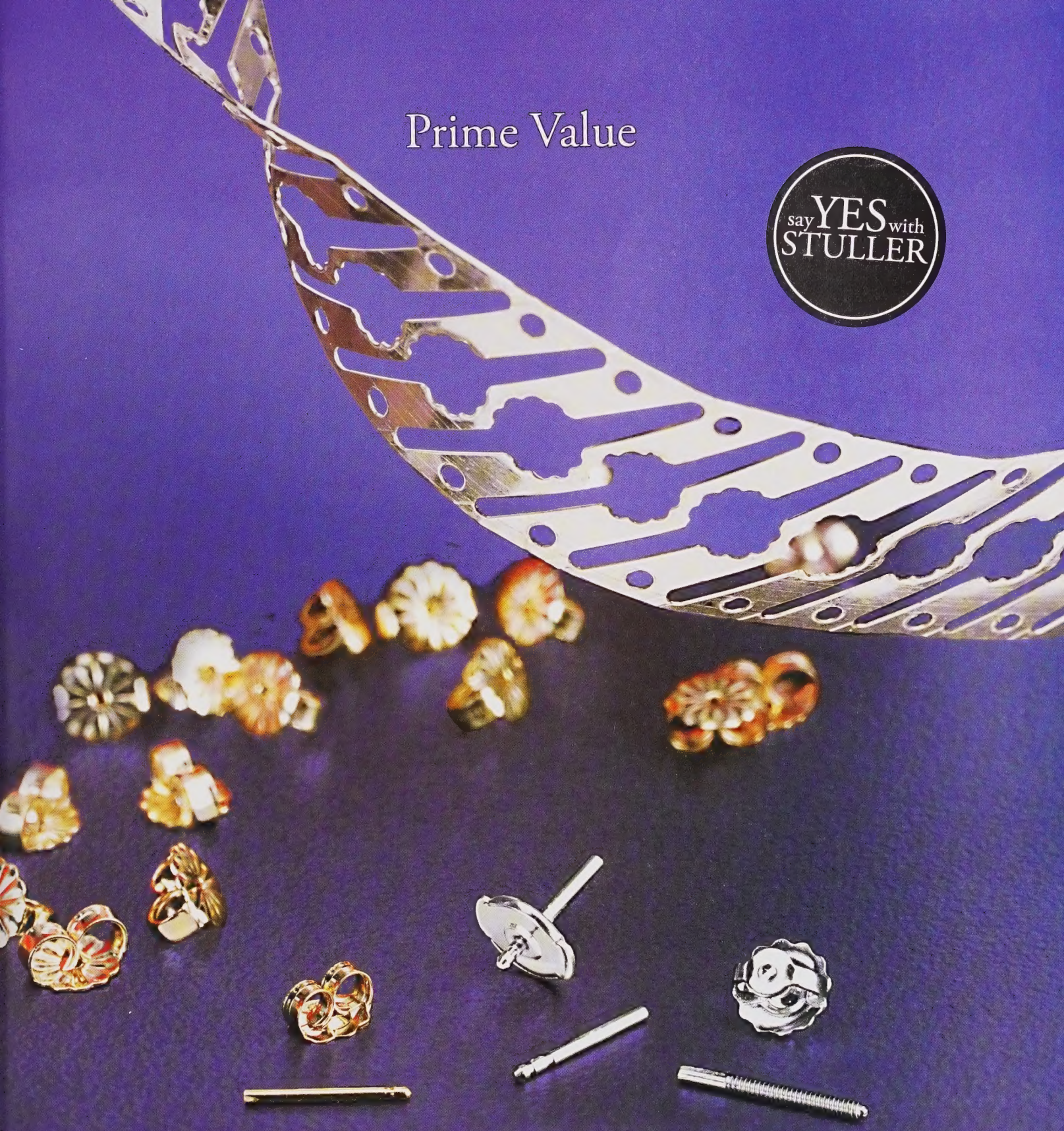
With over 10 years of experience in metals and micro tool making, Andrea and Chuck Kennington joined with Lester Bryant, an experienced metal fabricator and engraver, to create N.C. Black Company. Working in North Carolina, N.C. Black Company uses traditional methods to create a range of micro-tools, by craftsmen for craftsmen, for the trade.They use high grade tool steel and include hand made, finished wooden handles for comfort and long life. N. C. Black tools can only be found at Allcraft.

These hammers can also be used for texturing and fine anticlastic forming.

From our world renowned selection of quality hammers and stakes, to authentic Korean Gold Kum Boo Foil, to the best values in pliers, files and most everything in between, your source is Allcraft.

Right: N. C. Black Co. offers Micro Spiculum and Sinusoidal Tools and an instructional video about making Micro Spiculums. These tools are ideal for earrings, pendants and wherever micro matters.

Manhattan Showroom: 135 West 29th Street, Suite #205, New York, NY 10001
Phone: 800-645-7124 or 212-279-7077 **Fax:** 800-645-7125 **www.allcraftdirect.com**



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